THE MEANING OF LIFE

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BY

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NEW YORK

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THE MEANING OF LIFE. II

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TO

JESUS OF NAZARETH

WHO BROUGHT
LIFE AND IMMORTALITY
INTO THE LIGHT

THIS VOLUME IS
GRATEFULLY INSCRIBED

FOREWORD

This is an attempt to resolve the riddle of being into get-at-able form. It is nothing short of an effort to answer the unanswerable, to make the incredible credible; to render the incomprehensible understandable; with the object of inspiring belief.

Sermons are built as houses are built. The edifice is adapted to those who are expected to occupy it. A dim religious light is intended for the devotional mind, and finely chiseled form for the classical mind. These sermons are for hungry and romantic hearts. So an atmosphere of hominess is sought. Utility and familiarity, it is hoped, will be found upon every page.

Living, as we do, in an objective universe, we are accustomed to think in picturesque terms. Abstract thought is a recoil. It is an arrow that rarely hits the mark, but usually returns to wound the mind that shoots it. Objective thinking may shoot neither so far nor so high but it makes more bull's-eyes. It is the score, after all, that counts. The writers of the Bible have high rating for marksmanship because they have thought and written in parable and analogy. Uniformly, inspiration and revelation are adapted to man's restricted conceptions.

The questions here discussed have been chosen at random from "Why's Why in Life," a voluminous work to be found in the library of every human heart.

So eager and responsive was the hearing accorded the original delivery of these sermons that we are encouraged to hope that by giving them their present embodiment many others will be induced to avail themselves of a fuller enjoyment of the common treasures of mankind.

If these messages shall stir the imagination, the souls of men will follow.

A. E. K.

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THE MEANING OF LIFE

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I

WHAT IS LIFE?

"And He showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God." REVELATION 22:1.

The world has been ringing with praise of a certain Professor Michelson, who has accomplished an astronomical feat. He has ascertained the size of the sun in the constellation of Orion. And he announces some astonishing facts; the diameter of this sun is thirty million miles; it would take twenty-seven million suns like ours to make the Orion sun; an aeroplane traveling at the rate of a hundred miles an hour in one thousand years might circumnavigate it—possibly.

Now here is the point! How did Michelson accomplish this feat? Thus; with highest-powered telescope he brought his eye near enough to this sun to get the hands of his imagination upon it. And then, no instrument known to man being adequate, he had recourse to algebra. He made something equal something else (a, b, x and y) and thus he achieved his purpose. No measure was long enough to encircle the luminary. There were not enough numerals in all the world for a surveyor's chain. The human intellect

was too small to grasp such dimensions. So Professor Michelson resorted to symbolism—the symbolism of mathematics.

The subject we are to consider is of vaster proportion than any subject of astronomy forasmuch as life is greater than its greatest single phase. Standing out yonder under the starlit dome of an oriental sky Job appraised things correctly, "Hast thou measured Orion? No? Well, I am bigger than Orion." So the answer to the question "What is Life?" is "Nobody knows or ever will." Nevertheless, we are not baffled. We may at least approximate knowledge by adopting the method of the astronomer.

The Revelation is nothing if not holy algebra. It is a book of extraordinary symbols whereby John measured the immeasurable. Some readers regard it as a book of pictures only. It is more. It is less an aid to the eye than it is an aid to reason. It was not designed to give man a picture of that which eye hath not seen and ear hath not heard, but it was intended to empower reason to grasp something bigger than reason. It is a book of *higher* mathematics. The author, John, out yonder on Patmos, with life virtually spent, the last of an immortal line, soliloquized thus: "What does it all mean, this that I have been preaching, this life of which Jesus Christ was the supreme exemplification?" And inspiration gave answer, "And He showed me a pure river of the water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God."

Consigning our thought to the inviting drift of these crystal waters let us see how far toward a clearer

understanding of the meaning of life the river may bear us.

Life is the liquid essence of God,—"proceeding out of the throne of God." This river of being, flowing through your life and through mine, is God's fluid Personality. It had its rise away back in the throne of the Infinite Creator of planets and plants and all other life and it has increased the fullness of its flow as it has come down the ages to man. Some there are who give Life such a meager channel that it is scarcely more than a silver thread wending a tortuous way amid obstacles of one kind or another. But every *full* life is in very truth the liquid essence of Almighty God.

Time was when we were satisfied to regard life in a very narrow way. We believed that the evolutionary theory accounted for everything. We know better now. That theory was a bold and helpful guess. But, it did not answer a tithe of our questions. We were content to believe that human life proceeded out of a mass of jelly, and that, by and by, it became a monkey and by and by a man. I say we were once satisfied with that interpretation, but life has become a good deal bigger. We found upon examination that our theory did not hold good in all respects for the simple reason that nowhere in the universe does life become something other than what it was at the beginning. Jelly stays jelly. Monkeys remain monkeys. In a word the biologist has discovered this remarkable thing about all life; it is nowhere universal and general, but everywhere and in every case it is individual and personal. The evolutionary theory, as modified

and restated is therefore this, "Not, indeed, that man is descended from any living ape or monkey: it is rather that he and they have sprung from a common ancestry —are branches of the same stem—Life. There is no doubt of man's apartness from the rest of creation." Thus we see how fumbling inquisitiveness is slowly groping its way through tangled undergrowth toward the crystal waters of John's inspired river. Human life is different from everything in the physical universe for the very reason that it took its rise in the Throne. And, it is the fluid essence of self-knowing, self-determining Sovereignty.

The most that you or I can be is a channel for the God-life. The body may be a channel, so likewise the brain, one's influence, one's business. We have the utmost freedom. We may obstruct the channel. We may say, "This life Divine shall not flow through me, through my business. It isn't good for business. It makes business unprofitable. It makes one a prig. It may flow through my home, through my children and my wife, through my private devotions, but not through my business." We may do anything we please with the channel but we cannot touch the great thing itself because life is fluid and the moment we dam it back it goeth elsewhere. "He showed me a river proceeding out of the throne of God."

Again, life is *liquid continuity.* Weismann traced human life to the banks of "a continuous stream of germ-plasm." John traced it to the banks of a continuous stream of Spirit-plasm. We are viewing im-

mortal waters. They wash the shores of time and eternity. They are "pure and clear" with the Personality "of God and of the Lamb" (His Son). They seek outlet through the earthly media of the natural and the national. "Trees, leaves, healing, nations" is the human side of the picture of enduring life.

A particular river remains on the map so long as it continues to flow. An individual lives on and on so long as the Divine Life has its way. When a river dries up the map is revised. When an individual denies water-way, the Divine purpose seeks another channel. Men may come and men may go—but Life? Life sweeps on in ceaseless flow, for an unchanging nature is behind it. To deny life is to lose it. Such is the tale of life as unfolded by a seer.

We read the selfsame story in Biology. Two cells within the body conspire to preserve and perpetuate each form of life—unicell and multicell. And both are life cells. The unicell is a destructive agent that rids the earth of such bodies as are no longer channels for life; and the multicell is the constructive agent which builds new channels or enlarges old ones. So long as the body yields glad submission to the multicell the unicell lies dormant and harmless. But when the body is no longer useful, the unicell goes into action and begins to pull it down that the barrier may be removed from the course of onflowing life. And, they tell us that if it were not for the beneficent office of the destructive unicell the earth would be piled up with dead bodies as high as the Andes Mountains. Because God has put these two cells in every

organism, there is always room for life and its ever enlarging physical expression.

The early Hebrews entertained the theory that an indestructible life cell is located somewhere in the end of man's spine, that this cell survives the dissolution of the body and that from this single cell another, more glorious body is to be evolved at the resurrection, identical with the old one and recognizable. Is it more difficult to accept this theory than many another with no greater evidence to support it? Here, for instance, is an almost incredible tale narrated by an eminent authority. It is the story of the life cell of the whale, so very small that one million, five hundred thousand of them may comfortably repose upon the head of a pin, each preserving its separate individual life and every cell possessing in itself power to build a body weighing more than three thousand men. When a scientific man comes forward with such a revelation and expects us to believe it, as we do, I see no reason why I am not justified in accepting the theory of the Hebrews as a rough outline of personal continuity—the more so since I believe with John, that human life has its origin in the personality of God and therefore partakes of His nature.

Once more, *Life is liquid prophecy.* John observes that this river flows through a holy city. Is not this logical? Great rivers foreshadow great civilizations. The Mississippi, the Danube, the Nile, the Euphrates were and are prophetic of great social and economic developments. The greatest river of all, the river of life, would naturally give promise of the

greatest civilization of all, the civilization of the Kingdom of God. Life is liquid prophecy. What the life of God was in the ages before the stars were lighted or the earth formed, that human life will be in the ages to come. Jesus was the earnest of this.

A river, a pure river, a crystal river of the water of life, proceeding out of the throne of God, flowing through your life and through my life, and through us into other lives and through a multiform political, corporate and social order finally emptying into the future life with all its glad fulfillment—such is John's splendid answer to man's perennial question, "What is life?" Where will you find another answer that approaches this? The liquid essence of God, liquid continuity, liquid prophecy,—such is life in its totality.

When John chose this symbol he probably had in mind the Nile. The world's greatest river is the Nile. No river has been more discussed. No river has so enkindled imagination. From equatorial head waters, even yet indefinitely determined, it flows northward through the land of the Pharaohs to the "great sea" of Scripture, a distance of some four thousand miles. Much of this tortuous journey is through desert waste, the redemption of which seems to be its particular mission. Once every year this magic river gathers up huge arms full of rich black soil from the tropics and hastening forward with floodtide stride spreads precious fertility across parched and withered Egypt. What clouds and rain are to other lands, that the Nile is to this land. The ancients regarded the river with reverence. An annual overflow in a rainless region

was to them mysterious, even miraculous. To this day the native adjusts his whole life to the expected floodtide, so constructing his home that even the annual house-cleaning is left to the freshets which, beginning in June, attain a maximum height of forty feet and do not subside until September. In Egypt every year is a fresh beginning, every Fall is the land made new.

As the Nile is liquid history so the River of Life is liquid prophecy. It is not unlikely that knowledge of the former gave color to the texture of John's vision. Probably he had heard the river much discussed, its mysterious origin, its beneficent mission, its vast accomplishments. These marvels upon the natural plain made it easy for him to comprehend similar marvels upon the spiritual plain. Be that as it may, the Spiritual River is assuredly as much a reality as the natural river. The one flows down to the present out of a past utterly unknown, the other flows outward into the future from a Divine purpose absolutely unknowable, except as it is unfolded to us in the march of human events. However, of one thing we are absolutely sure. The mission of the river of life is redemptive. When at the floodtide it, too, brings from heavenly tropics the rich soil of ancient prophecy, apostolic faith and precious personal acquaintance with God, and spreads it with generous hand upon soul-dead nations and individuals, it transforms a vast domain of death into a kingdom of life, beauty and fruitfulness. It makes possible a fresh beginning in a world made new.

As the Egyptians adjust their lives to the Nile so

must the world adjust its spirit, laws and practice to the River of Life, remembering always that the life we are living, took its rise in the throne of God, and that it has a redemptive mission. The man who won't be redeemed and the civilization that won't be redeemed will find, sooner or later, that the river has passed on, leaving them stranded, high and dry. Some day there will come forth a generation of fathers, of mothers, of statesmen, of professors, of teachers who will say "Almighty God, here's your channel in my brain, in my heart, in my body, in my business, in our homes, in our politics, in our text-books. Here's your channel. Come, River, come, with all thy life-giving power! Come, flow into me and flow through me into the future and bear me with you upon the bosom of a life everlasting."

What is life? Life is the liquid essence of God. Life is liquid continuity. Life is liquid prophecy.

Here is a simple, definite, and sufficient picture. Who can say what is hidden in the unfathomable depths of this river? For one I am quite satisfied to commit myself to the swelling flood of tender emotion awakened by the symbol.

"And He showed me a clear river of the water of life, proceeding out of the throne of God, and of the Lamb." Are you willing to become a channel?

II

WHAT IS SPIRIT?

"The body apart from the spirit is dead." JAMES 2:26.

It is impossible to separate a man's spirit from his body without taking his life. This is so obvious as to need no further comment. Then why will so many persist in separating body and spirit in their thinking? If such attempts are hazardous in physiological experimentations are they less so in metaphysical theorizings? Reason hath a cold hand and a dead heart when unilluminated by spirit. And spirit is spooky when unbalanced by reason. Let not man put asunder what God hath joined together in the holy wedlock of actuality.

It is high time to ask some straight-out questions, in view of the prevailing trend of thinking. What is matter? What is spirit? What is the relation between matter and spirit? Are they antagonistic or are they comrades? Are they irreconcilable, or are they interdependent and inseparable? The answer is: they are intersphered to such a degree that it is quite impossible to separate the one from the other without destroying a full-orbed life.

What, then, is spirit? In a word, spirit is the creative and unifying energy in man. "The body apart

from the spirit is dead." Of course it is. Spirit is the architect and the builder of your body and mine. Spirit is the volition lying back of all evolution. Spirit is the directorial dominant of the whole physical organism.

The body apart from the spirit is dead. Says Principal Fairbairn, the philosopher, "In the strongest sense matter has no being whatever apart from spirit." The body subsists upon spirit. Likewise, to all practical intents, the spirit apart from the body is dead.* There is no such thing as naked spirit. Wherever the spirit is observable it either possesses or is putting on a body. The Bible distinctly tells us that even when spirit steps out of this body into the grave it steps into another body. How or when this is we know not. Nevertheless, to him who walks by faith there need be no fear of stepping over the brink of death into disembodied nothingness. We are abundantly assured that spirit is not to be unclothed but clothed upon, that death may be swallowed up in victory. I repeat, the spirit without the body is dead—until it finds another body in which to live and have its being.

In an Ingersoll Foundation lecture on "Life Everlasting," delivered at Harvard, John Fisk makes this unqualified assertion: "Survival of conscious spirit apart from material conditions is unsupported by any facts that we have ever been able to assemble. Not only so, but it is utterly and hopelessly inconceivable."

* See "What Is Death?" pp. 231 ff.

Of course, it is. Because physical man conceives of everything in corporeal pictures. The relation between body and spirit is very intimate and interdependent. Spirit is in the body not as a hand is in the glove; that is to say, as one thing is in an entirely different thing; Spirit is in the body as the germ is in the seed, the determining, the qualifying, the vital element thereof.

Why have I turned on these scientific sidelights? Because so many good and earnest people unquestionably practice a species of vivisection. Here stands one group declaring, "All is spirit and spirit is all." Which is sheer nonsense. Those who entertain such views usually become pronounced mystics and eschew all practical reality. Here is another group proclaiming with equal positiveness, "All is matter and matter is all." This too, is nonsense. These latter folks degenerate into rank materialists, eschewing all spiritual reality. So the mystic is eternally hostile to matter, and the materialist is eternally hostile to spirit. But God is hostile to neither, and Jesus is the composite of both.

Because of this sort of tangential thinking we are forever butting our poor heads against the stars, literally braining ourselves. No mind can successfully negotiate the crowded thoroughfare of the universe unless it observes the traffic regulations. The mind of Jesus punctiliously observed them, leaving us an example that we should follow in His steps.

On every hand folks are being bowled over like

tenpins. Nations are down, business is flat, the church is on its back, individuals are laid out cold. The power of darkness has scored one strike after another in recent years because men everlastingly persist trying to stand upon a single hypothesis. This requires gifts of equilibrium so extraordinary that almost no mind possesses them. God created man bipedal. If our intellectual processes ever attain the goal it will not be until we try to get there with both feet.

The jarring discords within us are due to the presence of too many soloists. We flatter this or that faculty until it gets puffed up with pride. Thenceforth it sticks up like a sore thumb and is as sensitive. It is dangerous to become enamored of a single attribute of being. It demoralizes the organization and wrecks the harmony. What is needed most within us and throughout the world is a chorus. The distinguishing characteristic of the Gospel of Jesus is its utilization of the paradoxical element of life. Religion is not mathematics and life is seldom logical.

Life is illogical, broadly speaking. So is sane thinking. As a rule sanity declines as thinking becomes more and more wedded to a single idea; until, at the gates of an asylum it expires. Alienists testify that the insane mind is the most logical. From which I conclude that to be sanely orthodox one has got to keep on good terms with the paradox, the chief of which is body and spirit. These are the zenith and the nadir of our intellectual orbit.

I have been reading a work, just off the press, by a distinguished French biologist, who likens physical

individuality to a populous city. Each city is distinguished by a thousand traits from a neighboring city. Its elements are independent and autonomous. Each has in itself the springs of life, which it neither borrows from its neighbor nor draws from the community. All the inhabitants have a definite life, and even breathe and are nourished after the same manner, possessing all the same general human faculties. But each has, over and above, its own trade, industry, aptitudes and talents by which he contributes to the social life, and in turn depends upon it. The picture thus far drawn is that of an animal colony pure and simple.

But, there is something more, the most essential feature must now be supplied to make the picture complete. This is—a centralized direction, which alone is able first to unite and then to maintain, to order, and to direct the human traits for the common welfare. This Governor General is Spirit.

A perfectly beautiful conception of being this is. And I take this to be the conception in our text, "The body apart from the spirit is dead." Spirit without a body is a king without a kingdom; body without spirit is a kingdom in a state of anarchy. So much, in answer to the question, What is spirit? Spirit is creative and unifying energy in man.

May I now lift your thought a little higher, by asking another question. What is Holy Spirit? Again, in a word, Holy Spirit is the creative and unifying energy in God. What your spirit is doing within your body, keeping the cells, the life together, and preventing the organism from breaking up in anarchy,

that God's Holy Spirit is doing within the universe, and the whole human race.

Many of us have an inadequate, if not a very wrong idea of Holy Spirit. Holy Spirit, as commonly conceived, is either something too sacred for every-day utility, or it is something too spooky to be grasped by an earthbound mind. Neither view is correct. What is the meaning of "holy"? Does it mean "set apart" in the sense that a gulf is fixed between God's Spirit and man's spirit? Does "holy" mean "other worldly" in the sense that only as a matter of supreme condescension upon the part of God has Holy Spirit any place in an unholy world? I think not. "Holy" means wholeness. It means completeness. It means unity. It means unimpairedness. This is holiness. So the Holy Spirit is the spirit of wholeness, the spirit of sound mind and sound being, the spirit of oneness.

Holy Spirit is not a New Testament doctrine, as some have thought. It is an Old Testament doctrine. That phrase was coined by Synagogue theologians hundreds of years before the advent of Jesus. It was a doctrine, divinely inspired as we believe, by which the Hebrews explained the prophetic gifts possessed by certain men whereby they were able to penetrate the mysteries of Providence and foretell in detail coming events. The doctrine expressed the thought that somehow or other prophets were on terms of peculiar intimacy with God, energized by whose Spirit they were able to think God's thoughts after Him, and anticipate His plans.

With the passing of the last of the prophets the

doctrine fell into disuse. Three hundred years of silence intervened between Old and New Testament, during which time there was no open vision. Men called into the darkness, "Why? Where? When?" But there was no answering voice. They knocked at the gate of the Infinite, but the knob turned not. Mankind appeared to be a homeless orphan upon the Father's doorstep. Then came Jesus! At once Heaven's portal opened, as angels of revelation and regeneration poured out, hands laden with prophetic gifts such as the world had never known before. They wended their way to Bethlehem, to Nazareth, to the wilderness, to the Jordan. You know the rest. Rejoicing was everywhere, for the prophets of Israel were returned again.

Then came that question of Jesus, addressed to His disciples. "Have ye received the Holy Spirit since ye believed?" "We didn't know there was a Holy Spirit." Three hundred years of silence had obliterated the memory of the doctrine. So Jesus revived the doctrine, giving it a new setting. This Holy Spirit was no longer to be regarded, as formerly, God's peculiar gift to prophets alone. It was to be the possession of every man, woman and child. At this announcement Jesus breathed upon the disciples and sent them forth to be the progenitors of a spirit-filled race.

Then came Pentecost, when drawn together by the Spirit, given tongues by the Spirit, and unified by the Spirit those many men of many minds from as many quarters of the world found common cause and ground for one body of faith, one commonwealth of God.

If the Holy Spirit were to come upon the vast audience before me our faces would not wear the cold and forbidding aspect of spiritual aristocracy, but rather the radiant smile of God's spiritual democracy. We might still think differently, but we would defer to each other's opinion. Those sharper lines of difference between the rich and the poor, the capitalist and the laborer, the foreigner and the American, would be at once softened into the Kingdom landscape. Verily, verily, the unifying energy of God is even now at work in state, in church, in race, in home, in individual heart. This I believe with all my soul and mind—don't you?

Some fine day the Holy Spirit will have His way in industry and will completely revolutionize it. There will no longer be strikes, lock-outs, misunderstandings and mis-carriages of justice. The creative and unifying energy of the Infinite will straighten out the kinks in the spirit of human infinitesimals.

The superlative temptation, in every life before me, is identically that experienced by Jesus. The Spirit within Jesus led Him into the wilderness, there to be tried by the spirit of disunion. The unholy spirit sought, by one means after another, to isolate the several members of Christ's tri-unity. First he sought to isolate the physical. "You are hungry, you are famished; you need not be; all power is within you; command that these stones be made bread." Holy Spirit triumphed as Jesus said, "I am more than physical. Man shall not live by bread alone." Unholy spirit tried another tack. Conducting Him to

the holy city and setting Him on a pinnacle of the temple he endeavored to isolate the spiritual nature by this temptation: "You are the spirit-child of God, the only Begotten and well-beloved Son of God. Your father has promised to give His angels charge concerning you lest at any time you dash your foot against a stone. Come, cast yourself down." Again the Spirit of Wholeness triumphed as Jesus replied: "I am one man, I am one complete whole in my Father. You shall not isolate my spiritual nature or tempt me to commit suicide even in the name of faith." Yet again, the Spirit of Disunion tried it—this time his purpose was to isolate Christ's vocational nature. "You are here on earth to establish a kingdom. Why go to Gethsemane or to the cross? Why not be sensible? Only acknowledge my sovereignty in the realm of the physical and I will become your vassal in the realm of the spiritual." And Jesus said, "I deny your sovereignty anywhere. This is God's world, man is God's child. So these shall be one in us. Get thee behind me, Satan, for thou understandest not the things that be of God." 'Twas thus that Jesus preserved the unity of His nature, physical, spiritual, vocational; and angels came and ministered unto Him. And the New Testament narrative goes on to say "Then went Jesus forth from the wilderness full of the Holy Ghost and of power."

Of course, He did, and you can, too, my tempted brother, my tempted sister. If you have fallen under the spell of the tempter's machinations, I am able to say to you, as a minister of God, that it is not because you are any worse than other people, but it is

because you are permitting the unholy spirit to isolate some part of a nature that God intends shall be a complete whole. You have allowed your physical nature to be isolated, from your spiritual, or your spiritual from your physical, or your vocational from your visionful.

Out of my early ministry I recall a very extraordinary experience which throws a flood of light upon the text. A man of my congregation was dramatically converted. He was at his daily work when like a lightning flash there came over him an unutterable sense of sin. No minister, no song, no religious atmosphere, yet he stood in the presence of God more truly than he ever had in church. He dropped his tools and rushing out into the yard he fell upon his knees beside a broken box crying like a child. Godly men followed. They mingled their tears of joy with his tears of anguish. Slowly they led him into the light and liberty of the Saviour's presence.

For a month or so he was about the happiest man you ever saw. He testified at every prayer meeting. Then, one day he changed. Clouds appeared upon his face. I could not understand it. When I pressed him for the reason he unburdened himself. He had been told that he had not received the Holy Ghost.

"Why!" said I. "Where have you gotten this notion? How do you suppose you came by such a dramatic conversion apart from the Holy Ghost? Man, is it possible that you doubt the Holy Ghost who has laid hands upon you with such violence? Wake up! You ought to be on your knees thanking God for what He

has done for you. Not one man in a thousand has had the witness of the Spirit and the ringing challenge that you have had."

But he persisted, "No, I haven't the Holy Ghost."

Said I, "What makes you think so?"

It then came out that he had been attending Holiness Meetings, where certain sanctimonious faddists had gotten him all tangled up in a skein of yarn that he could not untangle. He had been told that to find peace he would have to go to a Methodist altar.

"Well, go," said I. "By all means, go to-night. There's a revival on across the street. I'll go too, and pray for you all evening."

"No, that I won't do! I have always said that I would never be converted at a Methodist altar. I don't believe in that kind of fuss."

"You had about as fussy a conversion as ever I heard of. You are the last man to throw stones at fuss. Since you have erected the altar service as a barrier between yourself and God, no one can pull it down but you. Go do the thing you have said you will never do and you will doubtless find peace."

He took my advice and it came out as I had foreseen.

The end was not yet—for within a month the man was at it again. This time introspection was complicated with illness, making the case exceedingly distressing. An operation was advised. In the good Providence of God this proved a blessing in disguise, for he fell into the hands of a godly surgeon, who saw at once that back of the physical there was something wrong. The day before the operation he said

to his patient, "Your life is in God's hands. Are you at peace with Him?" This question led my friend to unbosom himself, whereupon the surgeon administered the following homily: "Whenever I treat a patient I endeavor to keep the various parts of his being together. I want his mind, his will, his body, his confidence with me. I must treat the whole man. I cannot successfully treat anatomy apart from mind and spirit. If I am to heal you I must have full access to all the fountains of life. It was God who taught me this secret of effectual surgery. I think your trouble is this: You have not permitted God to treat the whole man. You are expecting Him to do His work piecemeal. You want Him to minister to the spiritual life apart from the physical. I don't believe He will do it that way."

My friend was so impressed by this line of thought that he said, "Dr. ——, can you recommend a book dealing with this matter as you have, which I may read while I am in the hospital?"

"Well, there are many books upon the subject but on the whole I think the best is the Gospel of John. I would prescribe for you daily readings in John, the gospel of the spirit-filled life, the standard work of all life literature. And remember, as you read to read with the whole man, for you will be reading the story of a whole man. John's story is of a man who possessed the Holy Spirit in fullest measure, yet it was perfectly balanced with physical things."

The prescription was taken, and my friend entered upon a joyous Christian experience. I wish you might have heard his first testimony in our prayer meeting

when he returned. He declared that it was worth all the suffering to have come under the wonderful surgeon who made it so clear that one cannot receive the fullness of the Holy Spirit unless one surrenders to the Spirit body, mind, soul, and all.

Spirit is the personal urge both in God and in man. This urge which comes out of a past unknowable and moves us onward toward a future unknown is the creative and unifying energy of God working out His perfect will in man. Spirit and Holy Spirit constitute an interlocking directorate. Together they determine the progress of personality and the profits of piety. Wherefore give thyself up to Him and His Spirit will witness with thy spirit that thou art a son of God.

III

"THE SOUL'S 'I KNOW!'"

"I know that my redeemer liveth." Job 19:25.

This outburst of faith occurs in an immortal epic of the inner life. Its author is at great pains to make it quite clear that the glorious affirmation springs not from the mind, but from the soul. With rare literary genius he eliminates every other possible source. One after another of the so-called supports of faith are skillfully knocked away. Theology is discarded. Discussion is waved aside. Every contributing circumstance of human wellbeing is removed. And faith is stripped to the nude that it may stand forth in simple comeliness.

The story opens with a charming picture of piety domiciled with prosperity. Logically these should ever dwell together. "Godliness is profitable with all." In the last analysis an unprofitable era is found to be an ungodly era. So quite appropriately the tale of this godly man opens amid scenes of prosperity and piety and domestic felicity.

But at once the author introduces an element of cynicism. It is personified in Satan, who observes, "Doth this pious man serve God for naught? Not he. He is pious only because he is prosperous. He is good because it pays to be good. Despoiled of his prosperity his piety will evaporate."

There follows a series of calamities, skillfully introduced, one after another and with thrilling effect. Here sits prosperous Job at the city gate easily the leading citizen, honored and beloved by all. Messengers come running with evil tidings. "Your property is gone; your houses are in ruins; your flocks are scattered; your children are dead. Only your wife survives." And then, to complete this cataclysm of misery the poor man is robbed of health. Truly it never rains but it pours.

In his extremity Job turns to friends, who are speechless. They can bring no comfort for such exquisite suffering. Or, when they do speak, it is only to add misery to misery by the suggestion that it must be his own fault. He endeavors to think his way out, without success. He falls back upon conventional religion, and orthodoxy has nothing to offer him. Finally, when every prop is gone, when the mind ceases to function, when philosophy and discussion no longer avail, and there is left no ray of light to lend hope of deliverance, he rouses himself for one last and supreme endeavor and by sheer willpower passes out of an atmosphere of negation into the full certainty of the soul's "I know!"

How hath the soul such a faculty for knowing? Whence cometh such a clear shining of things unseen? It comes of intuition; the only way true faith can ever come. Faith is the gift of God. It is the soul's birthright. It is instinct within man's very being. The human soul, like the Divine soul, is intensely social. When God breathed upon him and man be-

came a living soul the door to the Father's house swung wide open, way back against the wall, affording free access forever between parent and child.

A saying much in vogue is this: "Personality is power." Which, of course, every one knows to be true. But is it no more? Is not personality perception—first of all? The first blush of dawning personality is self-consciousness. It would seem then that the first blush of faith should logically be God-consciousness. We know ourselves to be, by intuition, and for one I can testify that we know our God in like manner. Since we look upon our own reality with unclouded vision, directly and without the aid of any sensual medium whatsoever, it follows that we may, with equal facility, look upon the larger reality—God-consciousness. Immediate awareness of self foretokens immediate awareness of God. Which theorem is proved experimentally and conclusively by Job's "I know!"

If it is true, as science now affirms, that personality is the greatest thing in the universe, and if it is true that God is the greatest personality, then it obviously follows that there must be some instinctive basis of commerce between the twain. To reason otherwise would be to fly in the face of the time-honored axiom "things equal to the same thing are equal to each other."

The outstanding characteristic of personality is fellowship, intercourse, reciprocal exchange. The supreme worth of personality is commerce of ideas and emotions. Which commerce is not contingent

upon some form of human ship-subsidy, thanks be! When we are unable to persuade the congress of human faculties, sitting in state within us, to unite upon some form of subsidy, what of it? There are other bottoms—and safer, in which the soul may embark, to which our most treasured possessions may be committed with safety and in which God may send to us His best gift—faith, together with all the riches of His grace.

Job's faith was strictly personal. Heaven's gifts to him were all personal consignments. A fact clearly brought out in the poem by the Voice in the cloud. The instant the distracted seeker uttered his "I know" God answered, "And so do I." In each new phase of faith "we know as we are known" and per contra. Believe me, my hearer, for I lie not, God will speak to you in some audible tone, once you break the fetters of reservation, ambiguity and uncertainty; once your religion ceases to be a hesitation and a compromise. The truth is, if one may diagnose another's case, you are permitting intuition to be lured away by mere inventiveness. This has excited curiosity but has not imparted insight—as you will freely admit. Faith is not satisfying one's curiosity. Faith is insight. And, insight is intuitive. So, try the upper trail. Try it. 'Tis all I ask.

It is as needless, as it is futile, to attempt to prove God to anybody. Long since, I gave that up. Time was when I carried about a vest-pocket edition of

theology. But never again! I would as soon attempt to prove to you that you exist this minute. When a thing is obvious why prove it? If God is not permitted to approve Himself to your confidence and love, surely no mere man will be permitted to do so. "No one is able to come to me unless he is drawn by the Father who sent Me," said Jesus. Personality is nowhere to be found in second-hand shops. Religion is the personal approach of a personal God to the personal man, and vice versa. To expedite this is the function of faith.

I am little interested in intellectual aspects of faith. The older I grow the less is my interest. I have noticed that whenever faith gets up into the mind it languishes. For this reason I resist every impulse of faith to climb the attic ladder. Faith doesn't have to climb. It may mount upon wings as an eagle. The weakness of advancing age is this; we want to wrap everything up in intellectual hypothesis and put it away on some shelf. This may be good housekeeping, but it certainly is not living. Better far that faith should be worn threadbare than that it should smell musty or become moth-eaten through disuse.

Nothing has ever been discovered by the intellect thus far that was not already known to intuition. The intellect always takes up the trail of a more venturesome pioneering faculty. It does the surveying, the organizing, the occupying—and not infrequently the boasting. Kipling put this thought into the mouth of his "Explorer" thus:

"Well I know who'll take the credit—all the clever chaps
that followed—
Came a dozen men together—never knew my desert fears;
Tracked me by the camps I'd quitted, used the water holes
I'd hollowed,
They'll go back and do the talking. They'll be called the
Pioneers!"

Can you point to any science, to any discovery, to any invention that was not known to intuition long before it was beaten into form upon the anvil of rational thinking? I know of none. Faith hath ever been the outstation of demonstrable truth.

Just when did faith dawn for Job? The answer is interesting and helpful. When he was at his wit's end, when he had exhausted every other means of knowing, then faith came. When he discarded all second-hand faith; when he ceased beating his brains against the universe; when he gave it up and looked up; then, and not until then, did assurance dawn upon his soul.

Picture the group. Here sits personified adversity upon his ash pile, sore all over. Grouped about him are "miserable comforters,"—Eliphaz, Zophar, Bildad and Elihu. They reason thus: "You must have done something amiss or you would not be in this sad plight. God certainly would not permit a truly righteous man to come to such a pass. God is good and just. The universe declares it; reason and religion support this view. Right your own life and all will be right." The only friend who had a mite of vision or extended a morsel of consolation was young Elihu—and this is not saying much. So they argued back and forth, day

after day, until the mind of the sufferer was driven to distraction, when by a single verbal gesture Job swept them all aside and did what every one must do in the presence of the formidable facts of life—simply trust. Taking his courage in both hands he made one blind plunge into infinity. As he did so he gave voice to a majestic and daring hope. He threw in the switch, so to speak, and on came the light, as he exclaimed, "I *know* that my Redeemer liveth."

Such are exactly the circumstances in which most men come into possession of a personal knowledge of God. Some awful extremity provokes the crisis of confession and God does the rest. When you are at your wit's end, when you can reason no further, when every theory breaks down, and the strongest arguments go for naught, then look and listen for God is nigh—"Nearer than hands and feet, closer to us than breathing." The lofty surges of religious certainty are produced from the deepest desperation.

We greatly magnify the difficulties of faith. Faith is, in truth, the simplest thing in the world. Aye, it is as simple as breathing; as simple as loving. The way to love is to let go. So the way to know God is to let go. The way to breathe is to just breathe, and the way to believe is to believe. Doubt is intellectual; faith is affectional. "As a man thinketh in his heart" so are his beliefs.

Faith would be as simple for us as it was for the hero of the poem but for the fact that we deliberately load it down with the very incumbrances that Job eliminated. Truly, experience is a book that all men

write but few men read. Think you the time will ever come when any one will write more cogently than this man of Uz, of the nearness of God and the ease with which a soul may reach out and touch Him? Why not, then, profit by the diary of a great soul? Job lamented the thoughtlessness of those who before his day had been over the road to God leaving no records to guide him in his later quest. The expressed burden of his heart is that succeeding generations shall not be thus handicapped. Invoking, as it were, the unborn age of stenography, he exclaims, "Oh, that my words were now written! Oh, that they were printed in a book! That they were graven with iron pen and lead in the rock forever. For I know that my Redeemer liveth."

Faith is primarily a working knowledge. It is getting the hang of things. One acquires the religious faculty much as one learned to ride a bicycle, for example, in the days of yore. When I became the proud possessor of my first bike—a 54-inch Expert Columbia, a friend attempted to teach me to ride, by the rule of reason. Day after day he trotted along beside me breathing heavily and perspiring profusely as he held the machine in his steadying grasp and reiterated the rule of equilibrium. Either I had a poor teacher or he had a poor pupil. Apparently I was making little or no progress. At last growing impatient I exclaimed, "I'll never learn this way. I see very clearly that I've got to master this nickel-plated broncho for myself. Let me have the thing. Sit you down and rest a while." Grasping the handle bars and resolutely

setting one foot upon a step scarcely larger than a period, I contrived to execute the usual hop-hop and balance, hop-hop and balance, until gathering courage I swung aloft into the saddle. Whereupon rules and regulations were forgotten and intuition came into play. With a thrill of delight I realized that I was actually riding, rather wabbly to be sure, but riding nevertheless, without thought of why or how. I had gotten the hang of the thing, thanks, as I later learned, to a small bubble hidden away in the inner ear and popularly called "the spirit-level." But I had yet another important lesson to be mastered. A strange propensity for running into things had to be overcome. A failing thus explained by my instructor, "You hit it because your eyes are on it. Never look at the thing you wish to avoid. Keep your eyes on the track, you would have your wheel take. You can safely ride the narrowest path if you keep your eyes on the path. When you look at obstacles you are looking for trouble."

There are a lot of folks who are continually running into religious difficulties. They are forever hitting the very things they wish to avoid. I commend to them my friend's advice. When riding a hobby or following the logic of some plausible author keep your eye upon Him who said, "I am the way." They ride safely who ride thus. Hidden away somewhere within the soul is the Spirit-level. Trust it. In threading the narrow defiles of religious certitude spiritual equilibrium is more necessary than mental poise—which is not to belittle the latter by any means.

He who will may ride the universe. The trouble is we let the universe ride us. We are God's children. Our Father has given us dominion over everything. The mechanism of thinking has been given to facilitate our doing His will and finding access to His presence. When we take headers the reason is obvious. We have not mastered the machine.

He was a retired merchant. He had arrived at life's common goal, success and affluence. But he was a long way from God—as he thought. This gave him no little concern. Often, in the quiet of his well appointed library, he inquired long and earnestly of the way to God. And as often I told him, "You are already God's child and have only to assume a filial attitude and claim your inheritance." At which he invariably dragged me up one of the many blind alleys that he was wont to explore. I doubt if the Angel Gabriel could have negotiated some of the intellectual difficulties he put up to me. His case seemed hopeless.

Then, one evening, (maid's day out), he descended to the cellar for coal. As he set the scuttle down beside the bin, the light from the flickering candle fell upon a discarded song slip used in our evening service. "I know that My Redeemer Liveth" ran the caption upon which his eye fell. Picking up the slip he then and there slowly read Charles Wesley's hymn and put it in his pocket. When all the family had retired, he sat long into the night with the soiled song slip upon his knee. What at first seemed incredible at last became a blessed reality. How, he never was able to explain. That reality it was there could be no doubt.

And when at seventy-five years of age he was baptized and received into our household of faith he voiced a regret thus: "And to think, Dominie, that these many years I have been searching for my Heavenly Father when all the while He has been standing beside me patiently waiting for me to reach out my hand and touch Him. How much time and effort I have wasted! How many happy hours I have lost from life!"

A touching sequel must be added to complete the foregoing. Following the funeral of this dear old man, some six years later, his wife told me that when going through his effects she came upon the faded "I know that my Redeemer liveth" tucked away in his wallet, right next to a comfortable roll of greenbacks.

Religion certainly need not await the halting steps of laboratory or seance evidence. It may move forward into light and love with the experimental assurance of a trusting child. Faith in one's earthly parent is not something begotten of reason or nurtured upon arguments. Is faith in the Spirit-Father something so extraordinary that all the normal processes of personal approach and mutual understanding must be reversed? Job's answer is an unqualified negative.

If the transcendent knowledge voiced by Job is not yours I am persuaded that your unfortunate state of mind is due far less to intellectual difficulties than to spiritual inertia.

> Look in thy soul and know,
> List to thy heart and sing;
> For soul and heart are founts of weal
> And their song is a living thing.

IV

THE CROWN RIGHTS OF THE SOUL

"There is a river the streams whereof make glad the city of our God." PSALMS 46:4.

The stream of human history is always pushing down toward some mighty cataract. Epochs end in great historical cataclysms. The flood, the exodus, the exile, the dark ages, the French Revolution, the Reformation, the World War, are the Niagaras of history.

In our consideration of the stream we linger too long at the falls, fascinated by the imposing spectacle or terrified at the display of such power. I would have you give special attention to the river above the falls. I am asking you to explore it, to examine its headwaters, to discover its trend, to get some idea of its significance. Take time to survey it, to sound its depths, to study its currents and cross currents, to chart its course. In other words, get a broad view of this stream of history ascertaining, if possible whence it cometh and whither it goeth, and how it may best serve God and man.

The text affords us a hint as to the significance of the cataracts. They are the water of human nature seeking its level. If the level of a spring is five feet above the outlet in a fountain the tiny stream in its

play will shoot upward five feet. So the various extremities to which a river resorts in seeking its level are determined by the altitude of the head waters and the confirmation of the bed through which it flows. In physics this is called the energy of position. That is to say, the energy of flowing water at any point is increased as the reservoir is raised higher and higher. For example, the St. Lawrence has one energy value at Goat Island, immediately before it makes its mad plunge, and another energy value at Queenstown, where having exhausted itself in the exploits of cataract and rapids, it slows down and more leisurely pursues its journey toward the sea. What is true of rivers is equally true of men. What transpires in the course of flowing water likewise transpires in the course of human events. What gravity is to the natural order that God is to the spiritual order. Waterfalls are human nature seeking the level of the originating source—God.

If you will turn to the Book of the Revelation you will there find the springs from which all of these cataracts of history proceed. "And I saw," says John, "a river of the water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God." Do you see? The life that flows within human beings had its origin in God's own throne. It is the fluid essence of Deity. It is liquid sovereignty. You cannot make it otherwise. You may philosophize about it, and speculate concerning it, and exert your greatest ingenuity to thwart it, but it will always remain what it is by nature, the fluid essence of the Almighty. This sovereignty

is flowing through kings no more than through subjects, in rich men no more than in poor men, through the proletariat no more than through the bourgeois. And it will continue to flow until it finds its level. It came out of a throne, it will go on tumbling over cataract after cataract until "Thy Kingdom comes and Thy will is done upon earth, as it is done in heaven."

Turn again to the fourth chapter of the Revelation; here you will see where this mighty river is finally to find itself and come to rest. "I saw a river proceeding out of the throne of God." Here we read, "And before the throne a sea of glass." The river has arrived. A sea of glass—all the cataracts are spent, the turmoil over, and the river at rest because it has attained its level. Its source is the throne; its end is the throne. And the throne is the throne of God. Such is the philosophy of life. Such, too, is the philosophy of history. And any philosophy that stops short of this, expressed with mathematical precision and in algebraic symbols, is a philosophy that takes little account of the facts, and partakes of the nature of intellectual treason.

The Hebrews made remarkable guesses, if they were no more. Of course, we do not believe that they were guesses; we believe they were revelations—divine energizings of intellect. Take their national hymn, the 87th Psalm, in which they picture the plunge of fluid sovereignty over cataract after cataract and the ultimate consummation in a holy city where peace and righteousness prevail, and where political sover-

eignty, with all its glory, becomes a vassal of Divine Sovereignty. The refrain of that hymn is significant. "All my springs are in Thee." Do you get it? The fluid essence of God flowing through Israel and through democracy is some day to attain an altitude of perfection approximately the same as its Divine source. So great a national hymn belongs not only to Israel but to the world as well.

This broader view of life will enable us to understand a great many things hitherto inexplicable. Take children, for example. Have you never wondered why it is that a boy no sooner gets among other boys than he aspires to be the leader of the gang? It is because the river of which I am speaking is flowing within that boy's life. Although scarcely out of the cradle he is conscious of his regality. For the same reason the little girl calls out at once when a game is proposed "I'm it!" So fluid sovereignty begins to seek its level in the tender years of childhood.

And it explains "the climbers," this larger philosophy of life. You have doubtless wondered why folks are not satisfied when they have climbed out of poverty. Why is it that with the acquisition of wealth comes the ambition to climb into social prestige, and then into the seats of the mighty? The answer is found in liquid sovereignty.

Moreover, this philosophy accounts for the recurrent spirit of revolution. It is evident that no man can be kept down for long. When repressed or confined he blows up. This is inevitable. God has imparted sovereignty to the other fellow in like manner

as He has imparted it to us. I have the feeling that no one of us could live in a kennel with the under dog for long at a time without becoming somewhat of a bulldog. Certainly we would "start something." This mighty river of human nature is going on from this cataract to the next, and you cannot stop it any more than you can overturn God's throne. So the endless struggle for supremacy must go on—and go on indefinitely. History will continue to push on and on toward mighty cataracts.

King Charles XIV., of Sweden, would never allow an attendant to bathe him, which was quite unusual as kings go. Curiosity was naturally awakened by this idiosyncrasy and speculation was rife. When he died the secret came out, creating a sensation throughout Europe. In preparing the body for burial it was discovered that upon the monarch's left arm was tattooed the red cap of anarchy and beneath it the words "Death to all kings."

How came this emblem and such sentiments to find place upon a king's arm? Very naturally. The founder of the present reigning house of Sweden was born on the edge of Spain and was a rank revolutionist. He was the son of a poor lawyer, and ambitious to a degree. Finding it difficult to get on, "within the law," as rapidly as he felt he should, he attached himself to those trying to get on "without the law." As a radical revolutionist Charles made no end of trouble for the government and was twice expelled from Spain.

Then came Napoleon's Conquest of Continental

Europe. Seeing his opportunity, the anarchist joined his fortunes with those of the little Corsican. He rose rapidly, eventually becoming one of Napoleon's chief field marshals.

In Sweden and Norway, as in other countries, Napoleon removed the reigning monarch, Gustavus the Fourth, and enthroned Marshal Bernadotte. And thus sovereignty found its level, and Bernadotte became the very thing that he thought he hated the most—*King* Charles.

The application is obvious. In the heart of every revolutionist and socialist, in the heart of every communist, in the heart of every man who is seeking to rise politically, financially and socially, if indeed you could see that heart you would find tattooed an intense hatred for the very thing God has designed him to be —a sovereign. The only question is whether he is to be a sovereign without the law of God or within that law.

Now, how are you going to deal with these waterfalls? That is the crux of the text. It suggests both the significance of these streams of human nature and their utility. They may be utilized. "There is a river —whose streams make glad the city." Cities symbolize civilization. God set the stream of sovereignty to flowing through your life and through all lives for a purpose—the realization of His Kingdom expectation.

We cannot prevent the waterfall, but there is one thing we can do—harness it. With it we may irrigate society, by it we may illuminate the world; we may

guide its power into all sorts of worthy channels; we may make it serve God and man.

The greatest book on social reconstruction ever written is the Bible. It is a comprehensive history of social redemption, from beginning to end. The history is in two parts. Part one—how man got started wrong. Part two—how man is to get started right. And the story revolves about two supreme personalities —the first Adam of the Garden of Eden, and the second Adam of the Garden of Gethsemane.

Glance backward to the first Adam. God said, "Let us make man in our own image and let us give him *dominion* over the fish of the sea and the fowl of the air and everything that liveth upon the face of the earth." And it was so. Dominion, there you are! Here we stand at the upper springs of human nature. Adam was but a channel through which divine sovereignty was to flow. Dominion must be made to serve and it must move within a God-ordained channel—obedience. The divine prohibition "Thou shalt not eat" was not intended to arbitrarily break man's will but to break it to the harness of a divine life-purpose. Obedience was designed to be the sluiceway, so to speak, whereby sovereignty was to be harnessed to the vast and intricate machinery of Providence.

Enter Satan! Who plays up to the river's ego; who tempts this fluid sovereignty. "Hath God said thou shalt not? God is jealous. He fears you. He knoweth well that the moment you assert your sovereignty you will become as God. Why confine your life to so narrow a channel as obedience? Yield your-

self to the spirit of sovereignty within you. Claim your royal rights. Declare your personal liberty. God made you to reign. God has given you dominion. Rule! Rule, child of the Infinite!" Then over the first cataract of history human nature plunged with a roar, the echoes of which are to be heard in every madness of human sovereignty from that day to this. The "fall of man" was an abortive aberration, a stupendous, an incalculable disaster, an unmitigated folly. The power of the human soul originating in the throne of God has gone to waste in one plunge of death after another, because we rush madly by the watergate of self-control.

Part two; the second Adam. Pilate saith unto Jesus, "Art thou then a King?" And He answered, "Yes, Pilate; thou hast truly called me king, for to this end was I born and for this cause came I into the world." Anticipating which dialogue Satan follows Jesus into the wilderness where he whispers, "If Thou art then a king, why confine Thy life to the narrow channel of obedience? Cast Thyself down. Work a miracle. Do a foolish thing. Bow down before me and take the short cut to world dominion." Listen! You are to hear the vibrant voice of true sovereignty: "Get thee behind me, Satan, for thou understandest not the things that be of God."

Now the *people* come forward to tempt Jesus. "Hail, King of the Jews! Come, we will place Thee upon Thy rightful throne." Then follows the story of the entry into Jerusalem, the disillusionment of get-it-done-quicks, and the triumph of true sovereignty as it passes willingly through the watergate of self-con-

trol and over the water-wheels of service generating the light that lighteneth all who come into the world.

Enter now the Garden of Gethsemane, that antithesis to the Garden of Eden. Garden of Eden—man's dominion lost by his loss of dominion over himself. Garden of Gethsemane—man's dominion regained through self-control. Jesus is speaking: "If it be possible, take this cup from Me. Nevertheless, not as I will but as Thou wilt." Again sovereignty is obedient and becomes omnipotent. "Wherefore God hath given Him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that He is Lord to the glory of the Father." Have I overdrawn the picture?

Friends, the sooner we accept the Christian philosophy of progress the sooner we shall arrive at the gates of Utopia. The city of God is not to be had for the price of police departments and law courts. There is but one way to reconstruct the world and that is the right way. Attempts have been made over and over again to reconstruct by as nobly conceived and as earnestly executed plans and specifications as any now upon the trestle board. In God's name, let us this time begin right. The cornerstone for the "New Order" is not yonder in the Garden of Eden; it is over here in the Garden of Gethsemane—a garden of self-control and of deference to a higher will. Square your own life and plumb the walls of the "New Order" with this cornerstone. The Apostle, that wise master builder, called it, "The chief cornerstone. . . .

For other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ."

Sooner or later we have got to come to it. The instinct for dominion cannot be extinguished. It is an appetite that cannot be satisfied. Here is a man who aspires to be a captain of industry, and he arrives. Is he satisfied? Not at all. He forthwith aspires to be Lieutenant-Colonel of production. When this ambition is attained he sets out to become Colonel of distribution. Is he then satisfied? Not he. For he then begins to pull wires that he may be appointed ranking General of federal control. So it goes. Such is life from the hovel to the palace, from the cradle to the grave. By hook or by crook each man, all men, here, there and everywhere, are determined to have their full rights—and more. So on and on the stream of sovereignty goes, seeking ever to find its level.

The masses are as bad as the classes. If I must live under a king I had rather have one king than a hundred million. I am so constituted that I cannot be a political chameleon. If my crown must come off before another's crown, let me, I pray you, cast it before the throne of God, for there I shall at least know that I am before the seat of final authority; that I have reached the moral and spiritual level where alone political, industrial and social peace is possible. Human nature will never come to rest until it rests in God. If the theory of democracy is correct, if all men are equal, if the people are indeed the rightful rulers, then it is high time we begin to train the

future kings. The logical place to begin is in the home and in the church.

Such is the established practice of royalty. Why was the British Prince sent over to America? Why did he circumnavigate the globe? Was this a pleasure excursion? Was it another way of spending British gold? Every one knows better. There was an excellent reason. Some day the Prince of Wales, in all human probability, will be King of England. He is now learning the job, sizing up the situation and making the acquaintance of a world family of nations. Britain would have a king worth while. She would preclude the possibility of sovereignty run amuck. In infancy they began to train the prince to be honorable, wise, versatile and many-tongued. Oh, yes, we train a political sovereign here and there. But with democracy's sovereigns it is different—we prefer to let them grow up like Topsy.

Do you suppose that the common man needs less training than royalty? If the man to the manner born must be disciplined, so much the more those men who have had all manners of birth. I say to you to-day, in the name of our Most High Sovereign, if democracy is to endure, if democratic ideals are to prevail, we must get down to the greatest business in hand—the training of kings.

We are endeavoring to do this in the Sunday Schools, the week-day school of religion, the parish house, the institutional church, the Scout movement, et al. These are the adjuncts of the home, never the

substitute therefor. Although, unfortunately, they furnish the only culture the children have ever known, in many instances. There must be more of this kind of effort. Only let not these great and going enterprises degenerate into mere playgrounds. It is serious business we have in hand. Self-control, obedience and deference to higher Wisdom and authority are the fundamental things to be inculcated. We deal with immeasurable potentialities and our one concern must always be how best to harness the fluid sovereignty which is now running to waste.

There must be a program. It must include certain major subjects. Every boy and every girl must be taught that he or she is a king or queen unto God. The channel of obedience must be clearly defined and prince and princess must be taught to operate the watergate of self-control. Adam of Eden must be dethroned and Jesus of Gethsemane must be enthroned in each heart. The significance of adolescent cataracts must be explained. Frequent visits should be made to the power station of noble biography where they may observe liquid sovereignty flowing through the great turbines of service. The mystical current of spiritual power as gathered from the atmosphere of God should be traced along the singing wires of human endeavor to the many outlets in business, politics, industry, family and social intercourse. And then, as attention is drawn to the fact that a river lighting the world is better than a river running to waste, let Jesus speak: "Ye are the light of the world." Such a program,

such a curriculum is well calculated to make the next generation more kingly and to bring the world in coming years a little nearer to the Kingdom of God.

Turn now to the plunging, roaring cataracts all about us, and let me ask you: Do they not inspire the imagination? Don't you see possibilities in all this liquid sovereignty that is now going to waste? Can you not visualize latent power and profit, light and reality in these untamed, unharnessed lives? Human nature is seeking a worthy task even as it is seeking to find its level.

"Kings of a hundred Dreadnaughts, ruling the seven seas,
Kings of artillery, powder and steel—shall ye endure all these,
Keeping armed lordship of earth where'er your sentries stand?
What are Akkad and Assur now? Shards, in the drifting sand.

"Kings of a thousand forges, kings of ten thousand men,
Liner and limited, shuttlewise thrown, from port unto seaport again,
Weaving a web of infinite threads, giants of hand and of brain—
Where are the galleys Phœnicia sailed? Ooze, in a desolate main.

"Kings of the soul's out-searchings, kings of the far ideal—
Poets, philosophers, prophets—the Christ—lifting men nearer the Real—
Not unto dust as the war lords go, not as the lords of greed,
But rising forever from life to life—kings and Messiahs indeed."

V

THE REASON FOR REASON

"As they reasoned together Jesus Himself drew near." LUKE 24:15.

A cat has been known to open a door by pulling the latchstring. This is instinct. But no cat was ever known to open a door when the latchstring was out of order. That would involve reasoning. Bees build their hives according to mathematical rules. This again is instinct. But no bee ever utilized the mathematics of the hive in an effort to decipher the universe. That would be reasoning.

By such illustrations eminent professors define the nature and the function of reason. Raising cats to a higher category and making bees human beings we see at once the reason for reason.

Reason is the ladder of the soul. It is the instrumentality whereby man climbs out of his limitations. "As they reasoned together." Here the ladder is in use. From the heights of a glorious and satisfying experience of heavenly realities the disciples have been plunged into a pit of black despair. Jesus, to whom they looked for personal and political redemption, is no more, as they suppose. The whole edifice of faith is in ruins. But the situation is not hopeless. Al-

though they have lost their Lord they have not lost their ladder. So we behold two of the survivors of a spiritual cataclysm engaged in a melancholy endeavor to climb up out of the débris.

Like the disciples we are shut in, all of us, and upon every side, by zones of blindness. We can see just so far and no further. Strange to say, the most impenetrable zone lies nearest to us. No one can see clearly within eight inches of the eyeball, and the most disconcerting thing about it is that one's life is mostly lived within this eight-inch zone. Here health and disease strive for the mastery; here, too, faith is lost or heaven is won.

What do we do about it? Nothing? Do we remain supine and suffer it to be ever thus? Not we. With divinely noble instinct we exclaim, "I will not be a prisoner in a realm over which God anointed me ruler." Forthwith we set about reasoning our way out. Round by round we ascend by induction and deduction, never satisfied here because the ladder top rests there—beyond time and space.

Reason enables us to perceive what cannot be proved. Some one has well said, "Nothing in the universe can be proved." Mathematics is the most exact science. Yet what has it actually proved—what can it prove? What is the world's war debt? Who knows? A line of figures has been assembled reaching from the mines of Ophir to the Bank of England and then some distance. But what do these figures mean? Absolutely nothing to the average mind. We are incapable of thinking in billions. Who ever saw a billion dollars?

These are terms of relativity, purely. What, then, do such strings of figures amount to? This: a Paramount film of chills and thrills, a hundred league reel of insatiability and insanity, of plot and counterplot, of villainous intrigue, and human waste and utter ruin. In very truth figures are only pictures of which Reason is the producer.

I have said that reason is the ladder of the *soul.* It is not the property of the intellect. It belongs to the master of the house; intellect is the servant in the house. On the best authority we have it that the brain never climbs unless commanded to do so. The brain originates nothing. It never formed a word nor originated an idea. Each thought, each word is put into the brain as books are arranged upon the shelves of a library. The soul says to his servant "Do this" and he doeth it.

Every normal soul has its ladder. All are not modern extension ladders. Some are very primitive but they serve the purpose. Any soul anywhere, in any age, may climb out of its limitation if it wills to do so. Long before there were any logicians souls used these ladders. Witness that tale of "Neptune's Cup," a name given to the curious coral goblet found in the Indian Ocean. It has a base three inches in diameter and a tapering stem of some six feet supports a perfectly formed bowl. Tiny creatures, working by instinct, reached out of cramped quarters and with deft little hands gathered from the sea water such material as they needed, never once leaving their shells. Working by reason the savages who dwelt in that

vicinity came to regard the chalice with devout reverence for they saw therein evidence of higher intelligence. So they climbed out of their barbarous limitations and lifted their hearts to God. 'Twas even thus with Christ's Emmaus friends. The brain staggered on in a zone of darkness accepting the incontrovertible evidence of the senses, but the soul rebelled at a black creed of negation and by reasoning found deliverance.

Again, Reason is a ladder by which to ascend. Now, it is easy to lose one's sense of direction when using reason. The disciples lost theirs. Finding them going down instead of going up Jesus asks, "Why are ye troubled and cast down?" Souls are not cast down while going up the ladder—they are inspired by an ever increasing sense of elevation. Each man is at perfect liberty to use his ladder as he will. He may go either up or down. One man becomes a skeptic by the same means that another man becomes a believer. It is simply a question of the direction. Descending the ladder round by round a soul may reach any level of darkness that suits the taste. And it is largely a matter of taste. Some men, not all, "love darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil," declared Jesus.

A library contains thousands of volumes, but what book is taken from the shelves depends upon the direction a man is going when he enters. With thousands of good books on every hand that he might read with profit, with innumerable logic-rounds that he might put his feet upon with reasonable certainty that they

will help his soul to rise, he selects only such as enable him to proceed further in the direction he is already going.

Judging from advertisements of one kind or another a good many people are headed downstairs. Books that were behind the times twenty-five years ago are finding their way to the "latest-publication-counter." Philosophies and religions that were decrepit or defunct when Babylon flourished and Boanerges thundered are rising from their graves regaled in all the finery of new religions. Loud are the plaudits of almost any religion with a pedigree of four or five thousand years. So take thy choice, O Soul. Rest the foot of thy ladder upon an age of ignorance and superstition and climb down or rest it upon an age of science and spiritual reality and climb up. For myself I am perfectly willing to take off my hat to the past, but God help me to keep my face turned upward whither my Master went.

The skeptic is the most savable of men because he need only reverse his direction. His feet are assuredly upon the ladder else he would not be a skeptic. The travelers of our text were skeptics, in the best sense. When Jesus joined them He had only to begin at Moses and the prophets and show how one and all kept their eyes upon a single object—the personal manifestation of God. By the time he finished the survey, almost unconsciously they had turned their backs upon the shadows below and were already climbing out of circumstantial limitations into the light of reality.

We come now to the most important of all the reasons for reason. Reason is the ladder by which the soul ascends to God. The foot of each ladder rests upon personality, and its top rests against Personality. Human personality is here, Divine Personality is there and here becomes there when the soul finds God. The supreme intent of reason is unquestionably this: to make fellowship easy between God and man and free trade possible between heaven and earth.

In my seminary days certain learned professors were expressly charged with the duty of reconciling science and religion, the idea being that an internecine war was on between the two. We do not so understand it now. We have come to realize that such a war would be like a man fighting himself. It would be a clear case of hari-kari. If science ever destroys religion it commits suicide. If religion destroys science it, too, commits suicide. Science is essential to religion and vice versa. When you knock the top of the ladder away from the throne of God down reason comes on the head of scientist and saint alike, and great is the spill thereof.

I was in another state some time ago, addressing a group of ministers of many denominations. My theme was "The Pressing Need of Pressing Personality." When I took my seat after speaking, a gentleman slipped in beside me and said, "Can't you do something for my brother?" I expressed my surprise that his brother needed aught done for him. I knew him well

by reputation. Indeed, several of his books are in my library.

"Yes, yes, but my brother feels that his life is a complete failure. He has lost his grip on all spiritual reality and he is so unhappy about it."

We talked long and earnestly about the case and arrived at the same conclusion. By abandoning his early belief in a personal God he had lost the main support of reason with the result that when he had climbed so far the weight of his own logic succumbed to earth-gravity and down he came. There are hundreds of men in the same sad plight.

It is a matter of common knowledge that the higher one climbs the more likely one is to become light-headed. Supernatural altitudes invariably tend to produce natural agnosticism. This tendency may be overcome, however, by lifting the eyes from the ground and turning them aloft. Much spiritual difficulty and more moral delinquency might be avoided did we but look up and not down in our various reasoning processes.

What brought about the world war? I have read several books dealing with this perplexing question, and each advocates a different theory. I may therefore be pardoned if I venture one. In my opinion our civilization had simply climbed too high for its earth-bound gaze and accordingly grew dizzy and fell with world crash. "Look where you're going" is in substance the golden "rule of reason." Events usually follow in the direction of vision.

Wherefore, it behooves us to scrutinize our visions. It is quite possible that what seems to be vision is nothing but a nightmare, such as a friend of mine once had. In his vision an iron ladder was set up against the sky as a voice said, "Climb! Climb!" He did so and safely reached the top. Whereupon a second ladder, this time of silver, was set up against the sky, and again he heard the voice, "Climb! Climb!" Having attained the topmost round of silver he found a gold ladder leaning against the sky. "Climb! Climb!" commanded the imperious voice. By this time his strength was waning, the ascent was more difficult, but with labored breathing and swaying frame he pressed on until he stood upon the last gold round. "Now, jump!" And jump he did. But he awoke with a start for he had fallen out of bed.

The history of human progress is liberally punctuated with visions which we would call ludicrous but for the fact that they have been attended by such dire and far-reaching consequences. It was just such a vision that brought about the world war.

I have said that reason is the property of the soul. That statement should be qualified somewhat. The fact is, reason is only borrowed. Away back yonder when God breathed upon him and man became a living soul God loaned him this superb faculty, a fact indelibly impressed upon my mind by a tragic incident of my early ministry. I was making a tour of the buildings of a State Hospital for the Insane in the Middle West. The physician in charge unlocked an iron gate and a heavy door and I suddenly found my-

self in the "madhouse" reserved for violent cases. The door had no sooner closed upon us than an inmate seized me from behind and shouted in my ear, "Have you thanked God for your reason?" I had never thought of doing so before. I had thanked Him for food and for raiment and for friends and for many of His lesser blessings. But from that day to this I have not ceased to thank God for my reason. Could greater calamity befall a soul than the loss of its scaling-ladder? Take care of it, friend. Use it wisely. Remember whose it is and why it was loaned thee. Don't forget to thank God for your reason.

And not only has God loaned it to us but He is holding the top of the ladder to prevent our falling. "And it came to pass that as they reasoned Jesus Himself drew near." Of course, He did. There He was at the top watching with eager solicitude the ascent of two precious souls. When He saw them hesitate and waver and yet so manifestly determined to continue the ascent He very naturally drew near to them. This is always the history of the rising soul. As we climb up God comes down. "Why reason ye among yourselves?" asks Jesus. Why, indeed, when God is ever calling across the zone of darkness, "Reason with me. Come now, let *us* reason together." As reasoning with a true logician helps one to think straight, so reasoning with God energizes one to think right. A straight track may not always be the right track. It is more important to be right in our thinking than it is to be logical.

We too often forget that God uses reason as freely

as man. Jacob's ladder was a vision, but God's descent to Jacob was a precious reality. Where do we go when we "go to sleep?" Who knows? Possibly we climb a ladder higher than Jack's beanstalk. However that may be Jacob was neither the first nor the last after a night at Bethel to exclaim, "This is none other than the gate of heaven. I will never forget this place so long as I live."

We have what may be called a first-class scientific demonstration of what I have been endeavoring to impress upon you in the story of Helen Keller which has become a classic. Here was a girl hemmed in on all sides by zones of blindness. She could not hear, she could not speak, she could not see. But she could reason. This a good woman sent of God discerned, and at once she set about teaching her to use her reason. After many discouraging efforts she succeed in getting the child's feet on the first round. It was on a day when Helen was very thirsty. Her teacher gave her a drink of water, at the same time tracing in the palm of her hand "w a t e r." Immediately the captive soul was set free as dropping the glass she threw her arms about the teacher's neck and wept for joy. The joy was so real that she wished to share it with another. So she gave her dog a drink and traced "w a t e r" in his paw. But, poor beast, he had no ladder and her efforts were vain.

Up, up, up the soul of Helen Keller went with surprising agility until one day she asked her teacher, "Who made this ladder?" "Who made the world?

Who made me? Where was I before I came to mother? Why is the orange sweet? Why is the sun hot? Why? Why? Why?"

Her teacher replied, "Force is its name. Force made the world. Force made you."

The answer did not satisfy, for God looked down from the top and called, "Helen, my child!" And turning Helen said, "Force cannot make something that can think. Stones cannot think, but I can think. Who made the feel in me, who made the think?"

Then the teacher, perceiving as did Eli that God had called the child, said, "God made you. God made everything. God gave you reason." From that moment Helen began to climb in dead earnest out of a matter world where things were clouded and into a spirit world where all was as clear as sunshine. Up, up she went until as the thrilling tale is brought to a close there stands before you a charming personality, a college graduate (with honors), a mistress of several languages and a word artist whose inspired pen has drawn some of the most fascinating pictures of God and heaven and immortality and home and faith and love to be found anywhere in literature.

The soul had climbed out of its limitations, out of its physical handicaps into the full glory of fellowship with God and into the lesser glory as well—the glory reserved for those who like the Christ have become saviors to mankind.

When the disciples reached home that evening they said, "Master, the day is far spent, come in." Jesus

went in, sat down with them to eat and broke the bread. "And their eyes were opened and they knew Him and He vanished out of their sight."

Oh, it is eventide for some folks to whom I speak! The day is far spent. You have been long reasoning with fellow travelers on the Emmaus Road. You have been slowly descending the ladder of reason as shadows have gathered about the head and the chill of negation has gripped the heart. Jesus sees your predicament; He draws near. He points to Moses, to the prophets, to the apostles and martyrs; see, all are reasoning, and all are going the same way—upward. Will you join this noble company in the ascent? Will you permit Christ to open your eyes and energize your soul?

Reason is the ladder of the soul. Reason is the ladder of the soul by which we ascend. Reason is the ladder of the soul by which we ascend to God.

VI

WHAT IS SIN?

"Against Thee, Thee only have I sinned."
PSALM 54:4.

In considering a subject one must first have a mental picture. It is impossible to discuss anything without this. Language is the vehicle of thought only insofar as each word furnishes a picture. Moreover, the picture must be the same to all who participate in the discussion. And here we come upon the crux to the whole so-called sin problem. For the regrettable defect of language is that it so easily lends itself to every trick of mental and ethical jugglery.

Unquestionably one of the greatest needs of the day is a common mental picture of that awful thing against which Hebrew prophets thundered and to directly deal with which Jesus came. We have accumulated an extraordinary assortment of incorrect pictures. A thorough mental housecleaning is in order, for most of the pictures should have gone to the attic long ago.

Latterly sin has come to be almost any vagary from brainstorm or delusion of mortal mind to "mere negation" (whatever that may be). But such vague images do not tally with the front pages of the newspapers, nor, for that matter, with certain phases of moral recoil with which most of us are sadly familiar. If the

recent holocaust has revealed anything, it has certainly revealed the imperative need for a new appraisal of sin. Which brings us to the text where we behold King David upon bended knee in a closet of prayer appraising sin in all its tragic reality—an insidious, deep-seated and deadly malady. And this is the uniform diagnosis of Holy Writ.

Speaking broadly the Bible is a work on therapeutics. In the opening chapters Moses ascribes to God the name Jehovah-Rophi (God of Health). In the Old Testament we behold a nation slowly losing its health through the interrupted flow of a Divine will. Passing over into the New Testament we note a very striking use of medical terms. Here a great Physician appears. He walks the pages with sublime personality. His touch of healing is usually accompanied by words of absolution: "Thy sins be forgiven thee;" facts so significant that Harnack was led to remark that in his opinion the rapid spread of Christianity throughout the Greek and Roman world was due to the form in which it was presented, namely, as a specific for a universal disorder that had baffled the wisest and the best men of every age.

And how does the Book portray this disorder? Does it depict sin in a thousand and one hideous forms of omission or commission only? Far from it. Sin is clearly more than murder or thieving or debauchery. These are functional aspects so common as to be easily classified. They are symptoms, eruptions upon the body-social. At this or that point subterranean forces of moral ill-health, if I may change

the figure somewhat, have burst forth into giant geysers of scandalousness. But the trouble is represented as more deep-seated, more organic. Sin is something back of any particular manifestation. What is this something? How is it to be pictured?

David's snapshot is the answer. Here sin is visualized with the fidelity of a camera. "Against Thee, Thee only have I sinned." *Sin is impaired spiritual circulation*—the interrupted flow of the Divine will—an embolism of a soul's arterial relation with the mind, the heart, the very life of God.

Nothing is so enveloped in a mist of divergent theories as the nature of disease. Yet ask almost any physician of standing what is the primal cause lying back of all physical disorders and he will answer "impaired circulation." Although discovered scarcely more than three centuries ago the circulation of the blood has been, from the making of man, the determining factor in the health of the race. Since this discovery immense progress has been made in every branch of therapeutics. And greater progress will be made in moral therapeutics when it is more generally realized that as circulating life is the basic principle throughout the universe, so it is in the soul and in society. Unless there be free flow for a Holy Spirit and a Holy Will the soul will die. "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." No Satanic paradox has ever made it otherwise.

The story of spiritual circulation is as simple as it is wonderful. Gushing forth from springs in the

heart of the Infinite a rich red river winds its tortuous way through a veritable terra incognito of human impulse, desire and will, distributing the Spirit and Will of God whithersoever it goeth, at the same time gathering up all impurities, yea even deposits of evil, and carrying them back to God's heart of love where man's contaminated spiritual energies are purified and sent forth afresh. Whatever clogs or otherwise impairs the circulation is sin; which is but another way of putting the time-honored definition, "Sin is any want of conformity unto or transgression of the law of God." By law the Westminster divines meant not so much God's organized law as His organic law—His law of life.

Although in those early days David could hardly have known much about the process nevertheless it is evident that he understood the principle I have enunciated. Witness his method of treating his own sin. There were complications about his soul disease. He might easily have been misled in his diagnosis. He might have treated the more annoying symptoms leaving the fatal cause untouched. Out of the prevailing opinions of his day (which were not very exacting) he might have concocted a lotion or an opiate which would have effectually allayed the pain and deadened the conscience. "The king can do no wrong" and was he not King? But no! He strikes at the root of the matter. He has sinned against the group, he has sinned against the individual; he has sinned against law, he has sinned against the light, he has sinned against his own better instincts. But back of all is the tap-root of evil, deep

down within the innermost soul—he has sinned against a Divine health which had once coursed so freely and purely through his whole being. There has been a break in the circulation—he knows it; he feels it. An appalling sense of loss has overwhelmed him. Loss of prestige? Yes, more than that. Loss of self-respect? More than that. He has lost that which is the most precious thing in life to one who is a man after God's own heart. He has lost the sense of God. There are chills in the veins where once were thrills. Formerly his whole being was dynamic with the presence, purpose and power of the Almighty. Now it is in a state of decline. A clot of human wilfulness has obstructed the flow of Divine Willingness. So his soul breaks out in the agonizing confession—"Against Thee, Thee only have I sinned."

The humanities are not enough. We have got to go deeper if a cure of souls or of society is to be effected. Our sin is against humanity only because it was first against God. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God" then wilt thou surely "love thy neighbor as thyself." I wish we might all have the courage to go with our sin (personal, social, industrial, political, international) into the very presence of God, for only there shall we find redemption and rest for the soul. Satan threw dust into the eyes of the first dwellers in a garden of the ideal, to blind them to the real nature of their folly. He led them to believe that they were stealing a march on God, that they were making way with something that belonged to Him. Whereas, as a matter of actual fact, they were plucking some-

thing that already belonged to them, something that God had planted in Eden expressly for them—but they were picking it before it was ripe. That is the essence of the story of the fall. Out of the Infinite heart a willingness to share with the creature the prerogatives of the Creator had already started earthward. It flowed as sweet and pure, as freely and fully as the river that "went out of Eden to water the garden." Life in all of its divineness was in its touch, human fruition floated upon its bosom as fertility upon the Nile. All would have been Adam's and Eve's, even to "being as God," but for a credulity that believed Satan's lie and a human wilfulness that dammed back Divine health. It was an early case of what Dr. Lyman Abbott has denominated "the denial of life," which thought he drove home and clinched in a Lenten editorial thus:

"Here we come face to face with the most terrible aspect of sin; all imagery of the spirit of evil is external and crude in the presence of the truth that it is the denial of God, the betrayal of the soul. As a father suffers with the son who has committed a crime and shares in spirit his shame and punishment, so God suffers for the sins of the world. The supreme agony of the cross was not pain of body but anguish of soul that men should strike down the hands that held out to them purity, freedom, love and peace, and choose hatred, corruption and strife in their place."

"The boy who breaks the law of the school thinks he is asserting his freedom by defeating arbitrary authority and does not know he is cheating himself.

The discipline which he tries to evade was devised for the scholar, not the master; it embodies the larger experience of older men eager to fit him for tasks and opportunities which he neither foresees nor understands. Sin is always denial, not only of God, but of our divinest possibilities; in disobedience of the laws of God we buy our freedom instead of asserting it, narrow life instead of broadening it, and cheat ourselves instead of evading God."

What about our spiritual circulation? Let me speak frankly and personally. Have the arteries hardened? Has a clot of dollars or deeds shut off the sense of God? Has the slowing up in the flow of the Spirit and Will of God already manifested itself in some form of delinquency? Perhaps the decline has not gone so far as yet. It may be that the only alarming symptom thus far noticed is a feeling of listlessness. Well, what are we going to do about it? Whither shall we turn for a cure? Two schools of quackery advertise that they will guarantee to relieve the pangs of conscience: the one lays upon *society* responsibility for all individual lapses; the other, being more psychological in its treatment, proclaims the supremacy of *instinct* and holds that it is wrong for God or for man to interfere with eager wishes. Pay your money and take your choice. But remember there's death in either cup.

God give us the sincerity and the courage of this royal sinner to face the facts and to exert the faith that removes microbes as well as mountains, that remedies causes as easily as consequences.

I pass to a brighter side of the problem of soul-cure. Fortunately, sin, as a rule, impairs without totally destroying spiritual circulation. David was so moved by this fact that his gratitude spilled over in song. We live in a friendly universe. I cut my finger and thanks to the circulation pure blood rushes at once to my assistance, filling and healing the wound. I bark a tree in my wood-lot and within an hour I observe that the sap has filled the gash and the tree is well on the road to complete recovery. So generous is nature in this ministry of healing that her remedial agencies work more rapidly in a great crisis than they do in normal circumstances. Wounds which in everyday life would result in death before the arrival of a physician are not nearly so deadly in war. On the battlefield men have lived for hours with a gaping wound that would have quickly taken them off had it been received on the farm or in the mill. This is accounted for on the ground that the very intenseness of the crisis quickens the circulation and makes the oozing blood more promptly thicken into an air-tight, germ-proof covering over the wound.

Exactly the same phenomenon is observed in spiritual circulation. When wrong has been done and the soul is mortally wounded God's Spirit and Will rush in to fill the wound. The greater the moral crisis the more active and effectual are the saving forces. A more acute crisis could scarcely be conceived than that which had arisen in David's life. Not in the exalted moment of military triumph, prophetic anointing or kingly grandeur had he been as supremely conscious of the presence, power and love of God

as in the moment of abject humiliation and defeat.

The striking thing about the phenomenon is this: God's saving health actually produces physical symptoms. Step back into the privacy of solemn and sacred memories. Think of the time when you were on the verge of committing a heinous sin. You had flirted with temptations which led you on step by step until in a fateful moment you were almost overwhelmed. In that moment of crisis you were suddenly seized with violent trembling, you broke out in a cold sweat and you experienced such a sudden and pronounced spiritual recoil that the evil desire passed out of your life. As you look back, tell me, did you not feel at the time as though a strong hand had snatched you as a brand from the burning?

You see, we are discoursing, not upon mysticism but upon the most mysterious of all the mighty facts of a benevolent universe. What saved your soul in that awful day? May I tell you? It was God's own life flowing down to your succor. Sin had not completely severed the artery. By a supreme effort of love God's vital energy got by the deposits of sin that dammed the channel and His saving health flooded every moral and spiritual tributary of your being.

Notwithstanding all theories to the contrary, here is evidence we are obliged to recognize—that God *is* working in us to will and to do of His good pleasure. Even the blatant sinner who condones the wrong he has done with the excuse "God made me thus" has the witness within himself that God did nothing of the kind.

Surely no one who has known the varying condi-

tions of spiritual health and moral infirmity can ever forget the wondrous realization of the presence of God that overwhelms the soul at a time of moral crisis.

Such experiences, although painful, should be a source of assurance. They prove beyond any question that spiritual life has not been destroyed, it has only been interrupted. It is this that accounts for man's marvelous power of moral recuperation, a fact set forth in that very reassuring proverb, "A righteous man falleth seven times and riseth up again, but the wicked pass on to destruction." "What—a righteous man fall?" Regretfully yes. The Davids in every generation are legion. What then is the difference between the good man and the bad man? In a word this: you cannot keep a good man down. When a righteous man falls he *gets up*. A divine instinct within fills him with horror at the wrong he has committed, producing a recoil so pronounced that it literally straightens him up. When the wicked man falls, on the other hand, having effectually cut himself off from God by wilful and persistent sinning, he is down and out. Not that every so-called down-and-outer is in this extreme plight, for at the point where our circulation breaks down, at the very point where the inescapable logic of the natural order makes an end there the Logos, the Christ of the supernatural order makes His beginning. Hear me, friend, for your soul's eternal good! The Great Physician whom I represent has come for the express purpose of curing the incurable. Here again the process is as simple as

it is wonderful. I want you to see this process in its simple yet transcendent reality. So let me, for a moment, swing your thought far away from the matter of immediate concern.

The other day, in company with fellow directors, I spent several hours examining blueprints of a proposed water system for the Polytechnic Institute of Porto Rico. You would be astonished, if not staggered, at the almost infinite detail involved in such an undertaking. These drawings represented many months of labor upon the part of surveyors, draftsmen and other experts. The capacity and elevation of the mountain supply had to be ascertained; the ten-mile watercourse over hills and through valleys had to be charted, the pressure at every point exactly figured out, and the size and thickness of all pipings determined. Every elbow, tie, union, valve and water gate from the mountain reservoir to the Institute grounds was noted. It seemed a gigantic piece of engineering.

Suppose, now, that when this water system is completed a break occurs somewhere in the main. Suppose that instead of proceeding on its predestined way to San German the water should strike off across country to the sea. What then? Will the Board abandon the project? That is most unlikely since water in Porto Rico is as precious as it was in Palestine when Jacob dug his well. Will this system be abandoned and another installed? Not unless we have more money than good judgment and perseverance. The probable way of dealing with such a situation

will be this: Experts will be sent from the States and the trouble will be located. If the break proves to be serious and beyond mending the broken section of pipe will be taken up and a brand new section will be substituted.

Souls are more precious to God than water to the Porto Ricans. It has cost God infinitely more time and effort to install a divine order in human society. When something goes wrong in the flow of the Divine Will, God endeavors to make repairs. When the case is beyond repairs He resorts to substitution. He removes the "old man" and installs the "new man." Even when sin has completely wrecked the flow of God's Spirit and Will in me, by some means or other known only to God Himself, He is able to substitute Jesus for the broken section in my life. Thus He becomes our Saviour in very truth, as spiritual circulation begins anew. A truth like this, indubitable, supported by innumerable verifying experiences, needs no defense.

Friend, how can you doubt the power of Christ to restore the soul to normalcy in an age when surgeons are working such miracles of healing by methods of substitution? We know something about matter; we think we know something about mind; are we equally conversant with Spirit—Holy Spirit—the mightiest of all therapeutic agents?

VII

THE GREATEST DAY IN LIFE

"This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." MARK 9:7.

If personality is the greatest fact in the universe, as a well-known biologist affirms, and if, as another declares, personality is essentially an experience, it manifestly follows that the greatest moment in life is when one experiences for himself the presence and fellowship of a personal God.

To place such an experience within easy reach of average mortals the Transfiguration scene was set. This was no seance, to demonstrate the ability of a medium; it was a see-once, a specific revelation of the latent ability in mankind. Father and Son communicated in such unmistakable fashion that to those who observed the phenomenon there remained no further question of the easy accessibility of God or of the reality of personal communion with Him. Henceforth the mutual unveiling of personality was to be the supreme credential in apostolic evangelism.

For be it remembered that when Peter wrote to an agnostic age that rejected his tale of the incarnation and refused to believe in Jesus' bodily resurrection and ascension, he fell back upon the transcendent and generally accepted event to which he had been eye-

witness. "We saw His glory and heard the voice and can testify that these things are true." And in the presence of such evidence even the unbelieving were speechless.

Now, very much has been lost to us because this experience of Jesus has been regarded as quite unique. We have heard many sermons on the transfiguration of Christ but all too few on the transfiguration of human personality. And thus we have missed the point altogether.

Why, think you, did Jesus ask witnesses to accompany Him on this memorable occasion? Was it that He might show off or was it that He might *show how?* Did the Galilean wish to prove that He had some special point of contact with God which others may not have? If such thoughts have been entertained they should be banished as they do honor neither to the Son of God nor to the sons of men. Beyond any doubt the object of this mountain withdrawal was that Christ might supply each follower with a point of contact with God similar to His own.

There is no evidence that Jesus ever did anything with the thought of dazzling man with the exceeding brightness of His glory with the Father. On the contrary He constantly emptied Himself of that glory that He might the better fill others. Peter and James and John were asked to accompany the Master, so that, having observed Him in personal communion with the Father, they might be able to tell the world how any one may enjoy, in some degree at least, the same sweet intimacy.

Such is the angle from which I would have you view this transcendent bit of biography. At this moment there are personal messages trembling in air for every man, woman and child before me. God is endeavoring to get a message across an adamantine zone of silence to you and to you—a message none will ever hear unless you hear it. God would say to you, dear heart, "This is my beloved child in whom I am well pleased." But He cannot say it audibly so long as the conditions are not right.

The trouble is we have erected too many tabernacles upon the Mount of Transfiguration when we should have erected them in our own hearts. For the time being may we not forget Moses and Elias and Jesus and think of ourselves? If, through the good office of the Holy Spirit, any word of mine shall enable you to hear the message God intends for you I shall be more than thankful, for then will you descend from a mount of transfiguration to face the perplexities of to-morrow in a spirit and with a faith and fortitude hitherto unknown. Aye, you may be able to take up a cross even with a certain measure of joy when you have heard Him say, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased."

And, mark you, I am not dealing with some mystical element in this transfiguration scene. I concern myself wholly with the practical aspects of a very precious reality. The mysteries of communication between God and the individual are past finding out. In fact, we do not quite comprehend conversation with one another. Psychologists account for the intercourse

enjoyed in a public assembly such as this on the ground that the hearer's personality actually leaves the body sitting in the pew and takes its place beside the speaker and vice versa. Personality somehow contrives to depart from its normal orbit and to intersphere itself with another personality. Without attempting to comprehend this amazing feat, I entertain the belief that our Lord employed some such means of communication in the instance before us. Upon which assumption I venture to suggest how this same means may be employed by any one with relatively satisfying results. Two words are sufficient to outline the process.

First, there must be *detachment.* To receive a personal message one must insulate oneself, so to speak. Observe how exceedingly particular Jesus was about this. Not only did He withdraw from city and plain and multitude—He withdrew from three-fourths of His chosen disciples. I daresay those left behind might have short-circuited the Father's message by some trivial cavil, as Peter almost did by his over-zealous building-proposal. The Master was at great pains to insulate Himself. Had He not done so the heavens would have been brass.

Friend, if I were to tell you that by stretching a wire from the wall on my right to the wall on my left and by putting a pair of receivers to my ears I could hear the wireless messages from Washington or Paris, without the aid of aerial wires upon the roof of our church, would you believe me? "Surely," you reply, "I can believe almost anything about wireless." But what

would be the first condition of such long distance service? Would it not be good insulation?

Now suppose I announced in this presence that by insulating yourself from pernicious books, from preconceived notions, from philosophic abstractions, from business entanglement and from other people, you may, here and now, in this very room or yonder in your bedchamber, get a message direct from God, could you believe that? Well, such is my unqualified declaration. And God's messages are of such high power that they can penetrate every wall of partition, every intellectual barrier, every human limitation.

Are we so wise about electricity, so obedient to every known natural law and at the same time so ignorant about the greatest thing in life, so regardless of every law of spiritual communication? How long will intelligence continue to accept with such ready credence the things of time and dismiss with such easy disbelief the biggest thing that beckons from beyond the threshold of eternity? There is exactly as much sense in denying the possibilities of wireless transmission as in denying the possibility of direct and personal communication between God and man. I beseech you to cut loose from whatever has short-circuited God's messages. This do and the *greatest day of life* will dawn upon you.

How a child came to enjoy one of these great days is touchingly told by Dr. Swain whose little boy wouldn't pray. His father was greatly distressed, because he feared that the child had inherited his own earlier skeptical tendencies. By entreaty and example

he sought to correct the abnormality but with poor success. But one day when the lad stood looking out of the study window his father laid aside the book he was reading and pointing to the orchard where apple trees were in blossom he said: "Isn't this a beautiful world?"

"Yes, Papa."

"Well, who made it?"

"Why, God, of course."

"Wouldn't my little man like to talk to God and thank Him for making such a beautiful world?"

"But, Daddy, I can't talk to God. Nobody can talk to God. God is way up there in heaven and He couldn't hear a little boy down here."

"But my boy is mistaken. God is here; He is right out there among the apple trees. Can't you see Him?"

"No, Papa—and you can't either."

"But He is there," said Dr. Swain. "Yes, and He is right here in a little boy's heart."

"Well, I can't jump down my throat to talk to God," came the quick retort.

"I perceived at once," says Dr. Swain, "that I had undertaken a real task. So I said, Charlie, do you believe Papa loves you?"

"Sure I do."

"How do you know he loves you?"

"Why, I can see it."

"You mean you can see Papa's love?"

"Yes."

"Are you right sure you see it?"

"Huh-huh."

"Well, then, put your finger on it."

For a moment the child looked puzzled, then his arm went round his father's neck as he said, "Why, Papa loves me all over."

"Yes, but put your finger on the exact spot where the love is."

Again the perplexed look—then: "Well, I can't really see it, but it's there just the same."

"No, you cannot see love and you cannot see me."

"Why, Papa, I can!" said Charlie as he drew back astonished that his father could tell such a lie.

"Very well, put your finger on me. Where am I?"

A little hand flew out and gently struck the father's face. "Why, there you are."

"No, that isn't Papa. That is nothing but dirt. Did you think Papa was dirt?"

"N-o," uncertainly.

Looking down into the wondering eyes the doctor went on, "Charlie cannot see Papa and Papa cannot see Charlie. This is a wonderful bone-box," putting a hand on the boy's head. "When I talk to you do I speak to a bone-box?"

"No, Papa."

"What a queer piece of gristle," touching an ear. "Am I only talking to gristle now?"

The lad shook his head.

"Well, where is my little man, anyway?"

"Gee, Papa, I don't know. Where am I?"

"Listen, then, I will try to tell you. Love, like spirit, is not material, it is experience. My love knows your love, not as bone-box or gristle but as something we feel and perceive, in fact just as we know God and His love. See?"

After a moment's reflection the child was on his knees, and a little later he looked up from a book of Bible pictures and announced, "Papa, I have just been talking to God, and do you know what God said?"

"Well, what did God say?"

"He said, 'Charlie, you are a nice little boy.' "

There's peace for you—a peace that passeth understanding but not experience. What had this wise father done? Simply insulated a youthful mind that had somehow become short-circuited. On the Mount Jesus rendered a like service on a broader and grander scale, not to three disciples only but to all mankind.

The other word is *attachment*. Jesus not only detached Himself from human limitations but He attached Himself to God. That is to say He found a point of good contact. Did you ever stop to reflect upon the reason for the presence of Moses and Elias? Did Christ need Moses and Elias as intermediaries in prayer? No, He did not, but the disciples did. Naturally, His was a closer communion with God than that of the best human being. For the very reason that the disciples' contact was so poor Jesus sought to demonstrate how perfect contact might be obtained by imperfect men. Who were Moses and Elias? Men who had been transfigured, men who had gotten closer to God than the average mortal.

Let me visualize the thought I have in mind.

In the earlier wireless installation there was a contrivance which, although small, was the heart of the outfit. The outfit might cost millions but without this

little instrument it was worthless. And yet it was the cheapest thing in the entire installation. It cost but one dollar and a half. It looked like a small pillbox made of isinglass. In the bottom of this little box was a bit of broken rock crystal—it must not be cut, it must be broken, or it was useless. Now watch the operator! He first fixes the receiver on his ears, then taking hold of a pencil-like object that protrudes from the cover of the pillbox he slowly moves the point within around and around the face of the crystal, all the while listening intently for the first wireless wave, indicating that he has found the only spot on the crystal at which messages will come through. He may work at it for a half hour before he gets a response. Once the sensitive spot is found the pencil point is left resting upon it as the operator receives and sends messages. This little inexpensive instrument is called a detector.

Now Moses and Elias were detectors. What detector Moses used in his day is a question, but it is recorded that forty days and forty nights elapsed before a point of contact was found sensitive enough to gather in the great waves of Divine personality that came sweeping over Mount Sinai. In the present instance the time element is less conspicuous because a new and a living point of contact is provided in the previous unveiling of God to Moses and Elijah. After His transfiguration Jesus became man's best detector. Wherefore we say when we pray, "In the name of Christ, Amen."

One may be equipped with the best philosophy in the world and with a religious outfit representing

great expenditure of gray matter, but without a detector the entire installation may be useless so far as the personal experience of God is concerned. God will still be an idea in the head and His messages will be more or less second-hand and garbled in transmission. But take the living Christ as your detector and going aside from the multitude slowly move Him from point to point of life, to pleasure, to business, to home, to ambition, ideals, practices, until the most sensitive spot is found and pride is humbled, conscience becomes tender and the need of a personal God is most keenly felt. Then call, and listen and you will know that He *is,* and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.

One word more—there is a crack or flaw in the rock crystal of the detector in use at West End Church. Strange to say, messages cannot be heard over our wireless unless the point of the detector pencil rests upon some part of the flaw. Is there not a reassuring suggestiveness in this fact? If hitherto no message has come to you from the heavenly Father move Jesus from the smooth, polished surface of mind and conduct and let Him rest upon the flaw in your life, and in all probability you will get the coveted message, so full of absolution and assurance, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased."

VIII

THE SUPREME ADVENTURE

"Launch out into the deep." LUKE 5:4.

The day on which this familiar imperative was first uttered was the day on which the human race got a fresh start. It was the gray dawn of that larger understanding of life comprehended in our phrase "a Christian experience"; and of still larger consequences —Christian civilization. The haul of fish was purely incidental. The big thing was the byproduct—victorious faith.

Once spoken the words echoed down the ages from generation to generation. They gripped the attention of prophets and haunted the hearts of men. They initiated amazing and revolutionary events. That which had been thought too fantastic and impossible to warrant serious attempt became recorded history. And history in turn became a flaming beacon to light the way to further and larger undertakings. Words of such moment are destined to travel on and on, so long as there are peaks of noble aspiration and high endeavor to fling them back upon sensitive souls in the valley below.

When Jesus approached the disciples on this memorable morning He endeavored to awaken within them a triumphing faith. He sought to provoke them to

attempt the impossible. They had been fishing all night without success. The Master found them standing in the shallows washing their nets, after a night of fruitless labor. His words were abrupt, and to them unreasonable. "Launch out into the deep." The best fish were not to be found in the deep; nor was the morning hour a favorable time for fishing. But with unquestioning obedience the tired fishermen obeyed and were duly rewarded.

Now I wish to address this challenge first of all to those who are not professing Christians. "Launch out into the deep." The words embody the first essential of saving faith. Saving faith is a *supreme adventure*. It has little to do with intellectual processes. It has less to do with logic. The most illogical thing I know of is salvation by Grace. Saving faith is an adventure pure and simple.

In studying anew the imperatives of Jesus, I have come to realize more clearly than ever before, the utter folly and weakness of pulpit efforts designed to bring the soul to capitulation by furnishing the hearer with vest pocket editions of theology. That was not the method of the Great Teacher. "The simplicity that is in Christ" is a Pauline expression much overlooked. And how very simple it all seemed when we read the story for the first time. Was it the story of a palsied man who sought healing? The cure was "Take up thy bed and walk." Was it a withered member? "Stretch forth thy hand." Was it leprosy? "Go show thyselves to the priests." Was it blindness? "Go wash in the pool of Siloam." Was it a

small man in a big tree? "Make haste and come down." In Zaccheus' case salvation was somewhere between the branches and the ground. And so it has been from generation to generation, history repeating itself. We little men climb the big trees that we may see Jesus. From the branches we are enabled to observe Him in the crowd and we marvel at His power. At last comes the personal challenge, "Come down." The crisis is provoked. We make the venture—we reach the light.

Time was when I depended more upon argument to persuade men to accept the Lord than I did upon this spiritual challenge; I confess it with shame. The older I grow the less of that sort of preaching I attempt. There is already sufficient light and truth abroad to save the world if men but acted thereon. Sad to relate, there are hundreds upon hundreds who have been logically convinced and yet they are destitute of saving faith. And, the trouble is not that men are in a dilemma between difficult belief and easy doubt. The Author and Finisher of faith has diagnosed the trouble in unmistakable terms. "Ye *will* not come unto Me that ye may have life." It is not knowledge or proof that we lack but decision.

There came to my ears a rather striking example of the kind of faith that saves. To a Captain just back from the front these words were addressed by one deeply interested in the extraordinary accomplishments of the "Y": "I suppose in view of all the Y. M. C. A. is doing yonder there really is not so much need for the chaplain's ministry as formerly."

There followed an unexpected and beautiful tribute which any servant of God or of humanity might well covet for himself. "My dear sir, the mightiest instrumentality for good over there is the consecrated chaplain May I speak quite frankly?" "Indeed yes, Captain, I should be glad to have you do so."

He continued, "One night I attended a religious meeting with the lads of my command. Through the message I was compelled to face a decision which I had avoided for some time. The service ended, I sought the chaplain who had spoken, and I said to him, 'You have no idea how hard it is for one brought up as I have been to break through into an understanding of things which seem so simple to you. Can you tell me how one who received no Christian instruction in childhood may come to some clear understanding of religious matters?' In the most friendly, almost offhand way he replied, 'Why, yes, Captain, I think so, but first let me inquire if there is anything you believe.' I told him that I believed in the *living* Christ of whom he had been speaking that night. This time he fairly shot his question at me. 'How *much* do you believe in Him? Do you believe in Him enough to ask Him to show you how to break through?' A few moments of hesitation, a few words of encouragement, a brief season of prayer and I found myself grasping the hand of that man of God with a gratitude such as I had never known in all my life. It is all beyond my comprehension but in less time than it takes to tell it I passed from darkness into light. And—and"—he paused as though undecided whether to tell more. Then almost bashfully putting

his hand into his pocket he drew forth three khaki Testaments as he finished the sentence—"And I am never without a few of these to hand to some mother's son in the great moment when he needs some one to help him break through."

I fancy that many to whom I speak have experienced the Captain's difficulties. Launch out into the deep, my friend, for, if you will believe one who knows by experience, that which you seek is not to be found near shore.

The first article of our common faith is "Come," and the last article is "Go," and there is nothing in the whole edifice of Christian thought so important as these two doors. Willingness to venture is the key to the greatest miracle of all, the miracle of grace. Nor is it a leap in the dark by any manner of means if the eyes of the heart are upon Christ.

Then may I address the Saviour's words to those who are Christians. Launch out into the deep, ye children of the Kingdom. These words of our Lord embody the chief essential of a working faith. A practical workable faith is the only kind that the world will tolerate in the new era dawning. And what exactly is a working faith? It may be defined in two words —*glorious audacity*. On the higher plane, it is the same daring confidence as Dr. Nansen displayed when he demonstrated his theory of Arctic Currents by risking everything, fortune, reputation, life, upon a hazardous expedition. The fishermen of our text were to be sent out two and two as sheep among wolves. They must face a scoffing and cruel world

in a state of total unpreparedness,—no scrip, no shoes, no sword. And yet in a most extraordinary fashion they were armed to the teeth. Their belief in Christ was not abstract but profoundly personal, passionately daring. This lesson by the sea they never forgot.

Watch these men. Observe for example the boldness with which Peter seizes upon a spiritual phenomenon that baffled the ablest minds of his day, interpreting and directing it to a momentous consummation. The place was filled with people gathered from the ends of the earth, whose theological ideas were more confused than are ours in this age of isms and schism. All had seen the wonderful works of God but only one man present dared break away from denominational tradition sufficiently to plunge into the floodtide of Divine fulfillment with the exultant cry, "*This* is *that* which was spoken by the prophet Joel." This was sheer audacity and it was so branded by scholars and the railing multitude. Nevertheless Peter's supreme venture was the first outstation in the long and tedious journey to Kingdom coming. The fisherman had learned his lesson so well that he caught the imagination of three thousand men and set them on fire with the empowering Holy Spirit. Glorious audacity!

The loss of this element from the faith of a church or any member thereof is like depriving a plant of that which is absolutely essential to life, namely atmosphere. Had we not been living for the past fifty years in a more or less spiritual vacuum we would not now be ingulfed in so much darkness and death. I am

speaking to myself as much as to others when I say that the church of the Living Christ has fallen into the hands of clergymen and officers, of men and women who are, to some extent if not wholly, without a working faith. From duly accredited theological data we are able to say positively where we came from and whither we are going but we are not quite sure just why we are here. In such circumstances naturally there can be no spirit of adventure.

Audacity is the cardinal principle of the victorious life wherever you find it. Who are the discoverers? Men of audacity. Men who leave logic and argument behind and simply launch out upon an ocean of uncertainty.

Who are the inventors? Men of glorious audacity who launch out into bold experiment and daring adventure. When, on account of war conditions, nitrate was no longer available from Chile, such men reached up into the sky with the assurance almost of gods and hauled in all they wanted from the vast fields of space upon improvised rain wagons that rattled and rumbled on the wheels of miniature thunder storms.

Who are the captains of industry? Men whom we call "plungers," because they know how to launch out into vast financial undertakings.

Such are the men who make good in the world. You never find them fishing near shore. Theirs is a working faith. Then why in all reason should not the church do some plunging? Must those who have at their command Divine and inexhaustible resources, and only those, go limping along through a world of

opportunity upon the crutches, "Is it probable?" and "Is it proven?" Absurd!

When the story comes to be written I believe it will be the calm verdict of historians that the most stupendous achievement of the twentieth century was the discovery of the unlimited. The unlimited is the new dimension of life. Some nations are committed to the policy of unlimited obligation, others to a policy of unlimited credit. One would think such audacity could produce only graft, panic and bankruptcy. On the contrary it appears to have produced prosperity the like of which Crœsus never knew. I make bold to say that unless the Church of the living God likewise "goes the limit" we shall certainly be cursed with curses too numerous and too hideous to catalogue. The world cannot safely put in a million dollars and take out any number, unless its stony heart has been removed and God has given it a heart of flesh. You cannot build a new era upon old hearts by any hocus-pocus or alchemist's legerdemain. "Old Adam is too strong for the young Melancthon." Unlimited credit must go hand in hand with unlimited righteousness, unlimited idealism, and unlimited spirituality.

It must be clear by this time that what I have upon my heart to say is this—the church of Jesus Christ must dare big things. Unless she does so she will be left far behind as the procession of events advances. The world is away out yonder in the deep, to return to our figure. Shall we join them? If we make the plunge we shall find our souls energized as was Peter's. Within the church as now constituted is latent energy

only waiting to be released by the Christ who stands in the midst saying, "Launch out."

Brethren, the genius of Christianity must be conceived anew. The mother of our Lord made clear what that genius is when she said to the servants gathered at the marriage in Cana, "Whatsoever He saith unto thee, do it." We shall have no trouble with miracles if we follow the advice of Mary. We are soon to witness the greatest miracles in human history, and I am sure many to whom I speak covet the privilege of having a part in this great era of the impossible. With Colonel Mosby of Civil War fame we must say, "The absolute impossibility of success makes it possible." Hence the challenge to make the supreme adventure. From this time forward let us devise and execute on a scale commensurate with the opportunties of a spiritual age.

A dramatic incident of the never-to-be-forgotten action Northwest of Verdun affords a keynote for the church. All the traffic in trenches and on roads was blocked by our own barrage which fell too near the front line. The men stood helpless in mud, amidst bursting shells and the rattle of machine gun. Suddenly a muffled shout from far ahead swept down the line through the driving rain. "Tell the Artillery to lengthen the ranges. We are advancing."

It flew from mouth to mouth relayed from officer to men, from soldier to truck driver. Within a minute and a half the message had reached the batteries, the range was lengthened and the American forces swept forward to victory.

The Artillery of Faith has been firing too low. The highway of God is blocked and the soldiers of the Cross stand helpless amidst the din of things material. Pass the word along, relay it from lip to lip, from heart to heart, from pulpit to pulpit, from denomination to denomination. "Tell the Artillery to lengthen the range; we are advancing."

IX

THE CRISIS OF AMBITION

"One thing thou lackest." MARK 10:21.

A former United States Ambassador makes this ~~notable~~ confession in the opening chapter of his autobiography: "My life has been an intensive struggle between idealism and materialism. In youth I burned with an enthusiasm for the ideal. My intention was to make the future of my family modestly secure and then to devote my life to idealistic enterprises. I soon found, however, that I had a special gift for making money. By the time I had secured the competency which had been my ambition I had become fascinated with money-making as a game. Before I realized it I was immersed in a dozen enterprises, was obligated to a hundred business friends, and, like all my associates in the business world, was going headlong in the chase for wealth. At fifty-five years of age I found myself in the toils of materialism. I paused and took account of my future. I realized with astonishment and dismay how far the swift tides of business had swept me from the course I had charted for my life. I was ashamed to realize that I had neglected the noble path of duty. Conscience ceaselessly confronted me with my duty to pay back, in the form of public service, the overdraft which I had been permitted to make upon the opportunities of the country.

Repayment in money would not suffice; I was financially prosperous and rich in experience, money could be repaid by my executors but experience I must repay myself—and now or never. So I resolved to retire wholly from active business, and to devote the rest of my life to making good the better resolutions of my youth."

In this frank confession Henry Morgenthau furnishes, I believe, the true perspective of the picture upon which we gaze. This man of great wealth and high position is passing through a similar period of introspection. He finds to his dismay that he has not been mounting upward, as he supposed, towards the summit of human achievement but plunging down a declivity of disappointment. The discovery takes all the joy out of life. His gold becomes leaden, his honors empty. Into the very midst of his enjoyment of good things comes a crashing sense of obligation to make good. He realizes that henceforth goods must be subordinated to the Good, which he must find and follow. The awakening is followed by bewilderment. Whither shall he turn? Who will guide him to that Good? Has ambition led him on only to mock at him? Who will explain the true meaning of life, the mystery of this mirage called success? What is this intensely real and irresistible instinct that will not suffer one to be content with possessions but fires the soul with towering aspirations and breathless eagerness to reach something beyond? What is ambition anyway? Is it friend or foe, both or neither? A fascinating picture he presents to us, as he did to the

Master whom he seeks in his dilemma—so young, so candid, so earnest, so manifestly sincere. "And Jesus, looking upon him, loved him." The picture of a successful young man prostrated by ambition before Jesus calls forth one of the best appraisals ever made of life's values and the greatest word ever uttered on "Ambition" because it has the ring of finality. "And He said, One thing thou lackest." It will profit us, one and all, to reflect upon the implication of these four words, as they suggest the nature of ambition and its function in the history of a rising soul—and I may add of a rising civilization. First, we note the nature of ambition.

Ambition is a Divine urge. It is God's elective call. It compels the soul to press on to a predestinated goal. Paul's figure is tremendous and truthful in which he depicts his own soul as a fleet runner in a race for the prize. "I reach out if haply I may lay hold of that for which I have been laid hold of by God." Ambition is a "Divine" urge—mark that. It is the hand of God upon the head, the voice of God within the conscience, the light of God within the mind, the spirit of God within the heart—any one or all of these. Moreover, ambition is an urge moving in one direction, namely, the will of God. Like electricity, it may be short-circuited, in which case there is a spectacular and blinding flash of success usually accompanied by the wave of notoriety—then, darkness. Make no mistake, this urge is the beckoning hand of Divine destiny. Ambition is an abomination if it falls short of the "one thing" Jesus had in mind—a worthy goal.

Is wealth such a worthy goal, or position, or even an exemplary life? Wherefore, then, the "What lack I yet?" The ruler had all these, with youth thrown in for good measure, but the more he had the more ambition urged him on and the greater was its spell upon his soul. "On, Soul, on! To the heights! Stake out a larger claim! Here is not thy rest, nor here thine aspiration."

You see, what this life lacked was terminal facilities. It was on the right track but it never arrived. To be sure it dropped off at pleasant spots here and there but they were all way stations.

Half the world, to be conservative, is just like the young ruler, tortured by a sense of unfulfilled destiny. This is confined to no class in particular, rich and poor, high and low, lettered and illiterate—all feel it alike. The urge was never more strong and the soul of man was never more restless and dissatisfied than at present. Witness the mad rush after money. What do men do with it when they get it? Why, buy more money, of course. Look at the scramble after position. Why are they so ambitious for honor? That it may be used as a stepping stone to higher honors. Think of the insane passion for power aflame throughout the world. Why do men covet power? That thereby they may acquire more power. A veritable merry-go-round with a single incentive—the brass ring.

As these familiar phases of ambition pass in daily review one is reminded of a story Huxley told on himself. Going to Dublin upon one occasion to address a large gathering of scientists, his train mak-

ing him late for the meeting, he jumped into a jaunting car and absent-mindedly commanded, "Drive as fast as you can!" Away went the horse at top speed. After an exciting ride the professor suddenly came to himself and inquired, "Where are we going, my man?" "Sure, I don't know, sir," replied Patrick, "but I'm going as fast as ever I can."

So goes the world to-day. We are driving ourselves to death with little or no clear notion of the objective. There is motion aplenty, but it lacks motive. There is "pep" but it lacks purpose. Ask almost any hard driver what he is about, why he is straining every nerve to be wise or wealthy or influential and he will probably say, "Oh, don't bother me, can't you see I am in a rush? I can't stop to think. I am late now for a very important appointment."

I saw a letter recently which is characteristic of the times. It was written by a college girl to the folks back home. It was short, to the point and penned in bold, almost masculine, chirography. It closed with the words, "Yours in mad haste." We all laughed indulgently over this example of youthful up-to-the-minuteness. But, it was, after all, no laughing matter. It is safe to say that this young lady had not the remotest idea where she was going, but she was surely on the way. Fortunately for her and for the world there will some day come just such an awakening as the young ruler experienced.

Long, long ago there lived a great man who made himself famous by preaching a sermon on the theme "Every life a plan of God." We have few such ser-

mons nowadays, more's the pity. Although this sermon is now but a memory and the preacher is long since dead the truth he enunciated remains and its emphasis is more needed than ever before. Every life *is* a plan of God. If it is not then there is nothing in Old Testament history, nothing in New Testament teaching, nothing in Christian philosophy, nothing in the forms and ceremonials of Free-Masonry and similar fraternal orders. Should you fail to remember every other point of the message I hope this sentence will stay with you to the end of time. *Every* life is a plan of God. Let this sublime thought flame up in the heart. Let it grip the imagination. Let it energize the will. Let it satisfy the hunger of the soul.

As the watch in your pocket was made to keep time, and the thermometer upon yonder wall was made to record temperature, so the soul was made to keep time with the waxing purposes of the Good God and to keep up such thermal conditions as are conducive to the ripening of His holy will. Would you let your little lad have the parlor clock as a plaything? Would you permit him to use the mainspring to run a toy locomotive? If so the clock would no longer be a clock. A timepiece is a failure when it ceases to perform the work for which it was designed. A life, too, is a failure when ambition ceases to function in accordance with the Divine intent; when it becomes merely a means of putting "go" into things that soon vanish away. "Go" is not bad if we know where we are going, which is precisely what our lovable young friend did not know. This being the tender spot in his life Jesus touched it to the quick.

What this particular life lacked was terminal facilities. Now how is it with us? Here we are—a company of fairly ambitious men and women with more or less success to our credit. Has success brought satisfaction? Or has ambition prostrated us in the dust with disappointment and humiliation?

Stephen Girard had a very sad boyhood. He was blind in one eye. His father thought that because of this handicap he wasn't worth educating. So he educated the other children and left poor Stephen to shift for himself. At thirteen, and as a cabin boy, he was dropped down at the mouth of the Delaware River. Providence wafted his frail life up the Delaware to Philadelphia where extraordinary success awaited him, success undreamed of by the boy of thirteen. As money rolled in and ships increased and his power grew great and he became known throughout the length and breadth of the land, ambition kept whispering, "More, more, more." He could not silence the imperious call with all the money, all the commerce, all the power he piled up around him. Finally he conceived the idea that he might find satisfaction for ambition by doing something for others. So he built Girard College, but with certain prohibitions. "No religion in this college, no Bible in this college, no minister to be admitted to this college."

The great merchant enjoyed about everything that life could give, and he thought, as did others, that he was successful. But long after death said "Come with me" the Supreme Court of the State of Pennsylvania decided that Stephen Girard's life was, in certain important respects, a failure. How did that come about?

Well, a suit came up from the lower courts, originating in an effort to install the Bible in Girard College, the assumption being that no boy is capable of achieving the best in life until he gets his eyes fixed upon the greatest goal of life as set forth in the Bible, namely, finding one's place in God's plan. The Supreme Court in its wisdom handed down a decision to the effect that Stephen Girard's life was a failure because it brought him no satisfying joy, because he grew tired of life, because, with all his wealth, he became a misanthrope and was despondent to the day of his death; in fine because he never found for himself the goal of ambition—the Supreme Good. And the Bible went in and it is there to-day. Ambition is a divine incentive urging the soul to reach out and lay hold of the predestined goal of life.

Quite as important is this other implication of the text. Ambition is the *test of the soul's worthiness to arrive* at its goal. The specific function of the soul is self-control. It was given to keep in even balance the spiritual as against the physical. Ambition tests the balance to the last ounce.

As nothing goes into a bridge or a machine that has not been tested to ascertain whether or not it can be depended upon to bear the strain to which it will be continually subjected, so no untested life goes into the bridge to Kingdom Come with which God is spanning the gulf of unrighteousness. At the point where a life has been crystallized by selfishness is usually the exact spot where it gives way and breaks down. At this point the young ruler broke. When he voices his

aspiration for kingdom honors Jesus at once puts the strain upon him. His face becomes clouded and sorrow becomes his companion as he turns from the trail. "Go sell all that thou hast and give to the poor." I somehow think it was not in the mind of Christ to deprive an exemplary man of all his money. I can imagine no more likely man to be entrusted with that money. It would be just such a lovable person whom God would wish to have invest money in Kingdom enterprises. I think God would have said, "Young man, I can count on you, I can depend on you. Here, take this money and invest it for me. I will make you my fiduciary officer. I will give you more money for I see that I can trust you with it." Jesus was on the verge of giving the ruler joy beyond the power of his mind to conceive. But, he was not able to stand the strain of ambition; self-interest had crystallized his life and it broke at the flaw—money. Who knows but he may have come back later. Let us hope that he did. One dislikes to think of the permanent loss of so lovable a man from the Christ fellowship of ambition.

By ambition God tested Joseph. Ambition gave him his visions of destiny. He foolishly talked about them. Such divine revelations should be held in strict confidence—they are state secrets. But although Joseph made the common mistake of talking too much he stood the test, in the pit, in Potiphar's house, in the clutches of vile love, in prison and in power. His soul functioned. He retained his self-control.

It was by ambition that God tested David. He tried

him with vision, with anointing, with popular favor. Self-control held ambition in check even when in the cave the sleeping Saul was completely in his power; and when the tempter whispered, "Now's your chance, David. Knife him! The throne is yours!" How grandly noble the reply, "Who am I that I should put forth my hand to slay the Lord's anointed? I will bide God's time." It is not hard to imagine what God thought. "Here is a man I can trust. Here is a life with which I can make history."

The same is true of nations. God tested Israel by ambition. Said He, "In thee, O Israel, shall all of the nations of the earth be blessed." A dangerous thing to tell any nation, even America. Israel believed it. But unfortunately she misunderstood the divine intent. Instead of getting the idea that she was to be the channel through which blessings would flow unto others she entertained the notion that she, the favored child of heaven, was to be the recipient of the blessings. Israel broke under the strain of ambition. And God passed her by with the mental comment, "I cannot trust this people. I will try the Gentiles."

In like manner our twentieth century civilization is being tested. I wonder if we shall endure. I wonder, can London stand the strain? Will Paris be able to endure it? Is Washington able to survive the testings of national ambition? Will the soul of the nation function? These are exceedingly vital questions I am asking. God is surely testing us. He is testing you, Mr. Business-man, and you, Mr. President, and you, Mr. Secretary, and you, Doctor of Divinity. He is testing the nations of the earth by ambition. He is

saying to one and all, "You shall be great and in you shall the nations of the earth be blessed." Can we stand the strain of so ambitious an outlook or will the vision make us too reckless?"

Ambition devoid of self-control is full of peril. How well Shakespeare voiced the thought in those classic words wrung from the lips of Cardinal Wolsey, "Cromwell, I charge thee, fling away ambition for by it the angels fell."

What shall I do for a living? How many are asking that question. Better say, "What shall I do with my life?" The needle in the compass box must be polarized before it will point to the North. But when once it is polarized you can trust it in storm or in calm, in the darkness as in the light. Each life ambition must be polarized if one would be sure of making port. There is no surer way to accomplish this than by bringing ambition into vital touch with the magnetic life of Jesus. This the young ruler failed to do. He came running but departed sorrowful. Like many another he utterly misunderstood what Jesus wants of men on earth and why He calls us o'er the tumult.

Shall I make bold to assign for you the best possible goal for ambition? Listen then: "The chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever." There you have it, in words which have stood the test of centuries. Fix the eyes of your ambition upon that goal. You will find that in this sentiment even duty and drudgery have been set to music.

Hear this. Roger W. Babson, who is held in such

high regard throughout the business and financial world, makes this "Personal Confession" in his recent book, "Enduring Investments."

"One Saturday night I returned from what most people would have called a very successful two months' trip. I had been given luncheons by the leading Chambers of Commerce of the country, and had spoken to numerous very large audiences, where thousands had been turned away. All my talks had caused favorable comment in the newspapers. While away I had been elected to positions of power and influence by some of America's large corporations. Moreover, on my desk—upon my return—was a report showing that my business had just completed its most prosperous year, earning profits many times greater than I had ever expected.

"Notwithstanding these things which are commonly called 'success' I was tired and half sick. The next day on my way to church, I stopped in at the local drug store to tell the proprietor, 'Tom West,' as he is commonly called, my troubles. I asked for some aspirin or something of the kind which he slowly tied up and gave to me. As I turned to go out, he called out:

" 'Roger, you think you are prosperous, but I say you are a damn fool!'

"For some days this thought clung to me until it seemed as if friend Tom was right. Property consists not in fame, power or money. Jesus said, 'First seek the Kingdom of Heaven and all these other things will be added unto you.' 'Tom West' certainly made me think about many things, among them these:

"Once I had plenty of time for my only child. When I became prosperous she, of course, went away to a boarding school. When I started business there was plenty of time to go to Gloucester to see my father and mother. But when I became prosperous I had no time for them. . . . As for happiness, I envied the squirrels running about my place. I had been rated by Dun and Bradstreet but now I had God's ratings. Tom West was right. 'I was a fool.'

"Before another week had gone by I had turned over a new leaf. Men should live to produce. But the great thing that we are called upon to produce is a real and full life."

The Crisis of Ambition is what the ruler faced that day when he stood before Jesus.

Some such crisis must surely present itself to every truly ambitious person sooner or later. In one form or another will come the moral challenge to find oneself and to find one's place in Christ's kingdom program.

To this pleasure-loving and money-mad age Jesus is speaking—"One thing thou lackest."

X

UNFULFILLED AMBITIONS

"Thou didst well that it was in thy heart."
I Kings 8: 17.

A young woman of my acquaintance came to this city about twenty years ago seeking a career. She was from the sunny South. Endowed with a beautiful voice, and having exhausted all the advantages of her home city, she put herself under a well known master and worked with right good will to achieve the ambition of her life.

But New York proved only a way station, for having spent I would not dare say how much money, she set sail with her mother for the other side in search of further advantages. Then war broke out and she was compelled to return. To keep herself in trim she engaged a coach who promised to add three brilliant high notes to her register. And he did—but he completely wrecked her voice. This wrecked her health and wrecked her hopes beyond recovery. Then in the good Providence of God "Mr. Right" appeared, the nuptials were solemnized and a would-be star became the central sun of that solar system, the Christian home.

Recently she was bemoaning her fate in my hearing. Her life, as she expressed it, was an abject failure. Her ambition was never to be realized. "Think of the

money I have thrown away! Think of the dreams that will never come true! I have wasted my life! I am so unhappy!"

Most of us are very like this lovely young woman. I daresay there are few before me who have not entertained similar depressing views of life. Your highest ambitions have not been attained. Your dreams are unrealized. They were big dreams and well worthwhile. You dreamed them by day and they possessed your soul by night. You toiled over them, sacrificed for them, gave yourself unreservedly to the task of attaining the heights. All these years you have been on your way and you have not arrived. As it appears to you, life is a failure.

I am thinking of the young woman sitting yonder who planned to be a missionary. She had scarcely entered college ere her father broke down. He lost his property and then his life. Necessity compelled her to forego her studies. She became the support of her mother. She brought up all the children. For ten, twenty years she has been the family drudge, or she has been chained to a typewriter. But the dream is still cherished, and the old ambition continues gnawing at the heart. What are you going to say to people like that? I will tell you what I am going to say. Just three things, each suggested by David's unfulfilled ambition.

Let me say first of all; the higher our ambition the less likely is it to be fulfilled in a single lifetime. We may as well resign ourselves to the inevitable. The

measure of the ambition is the measure of the waiting time—and per contra.

There were two Davids, you remember; the David men knew—the successful soldier, the statesman who amalgamated an entire race; and the David whom David knew, the unsuccessful David, the David who sinned and failed. It is of this latter David that the text speaks.

What was David's supreme ambition? To establish a Kingdom? Not that. To lead armies successfully to victory? Not that. His consuming ambition was to build a house for God. The best years of his life were spent in gathering funds, selecting architects and builders, laying out plans, assembling timbers and other material. And, mark you, all the while he knew that he was not to be permitted to realize the ambition himself. He had inside information which precluded the selfish gratifications which are so large a factor in petty ambition. For God said unto David, "Thou shalt not build a house unto my name, but nevertheless thou doest well that it is in thy heart. Thy son who shall come forth out of thy loins, he shall build a house unto the name of thy God."

How many of us would carry on under such circumstances; knowing positively that we were not to see our ambition realized? Every one of us—if we were of David's mold.

The bigger you are the bigger your ambitions, the bigger your ambitions the more you are like God, and the more you are like God the longer you have to wait for your ambitions to materialize. How many of

God's ambitions have been realized? Can you name one? I know not one. The universe is not yet finished. The world is still being built. The celestial and terrestrial are still growing. In innumerable ways the plan, the purpose, the design, the dreams, the longings of a loving Heavenly Father find new and enlarged expression. And all take us by surprise. Can you think of a single ambition of God's that has been realized? Why did God come to this earth in the form of Jesus? To realize at once a long cherished ambition? Not at all. God came in Jesus to do just one thing—to plant Divine ambitions. He planted a seed here and another there and another yonder, and not a single seed came to ripe fruition while the Son of God was upon earth. Nor did Jesus have any expectation that they would. He was quite content to await the harvest-time. "The harvest is the end of the world, and the reapers are the angels."

Look into your own heart, my ambitious friend, and listen to a word of admonition. Scrutinize carefully any ambition you can quickly achieve. Such is not worthy of your better self. Be careful of the ambition that beckons you on with glowing promises of prompt fulfillment. By such ambition the angels fell. By such ambition Jesus was tempted in the wilderness. Such have been the ambitions which have lured civilizations to ruin. Such was the ambition that brought about a world war.

In other words, the man whose ambition is realizable in a single lifetime is not the man who is dreaming big dreams, who is reflecting the mind, the heart, the Spirit of God Almighty.

Again let me say: No big and worthy ambition is ever unfulfilled. Bless God for the "nevertheless" of our text. It means as much to you and to me as it did to David. "Nevertheless, thou shalt not build it but thy son." And that, after all, was the important thing. David wanted results. His eyes were upon the temple, not upon himself. We are ambitious not so much for the profits and the plaudits as for abiding accomplishments. Is it not so? There can be but one answer from our nobler self.

I remember very well that when the neighboring Cathedral of St. John the Divine was first projected much publicity was given to the fact that the plans contemplated the passage of a full century before the dream could be realized. Millions of dollars have been expended in the undertaking, thousands and tens of thousands of consecrated men and women have labored and gone on to their reward and there it stands to-day —unfinished. Who of all this glorious company expected to live to witness the completion of the massive edifice? Not one. Thank God for that kind of ambition. If we could build this world as our Episcopalian friends build cathedrals we would have fewer world wars and fewer aftermaths of reconstruction. Aye, if we built our Christianity after the same fashion it would always be in fashion. It is because our ambitions are sordid, low, un-Godlike, that we go around bemoaning the collapse of Christianity, the failure of the church, and the decay of civilization.

I am taking this sermon to myself. Your minister has his moments of depression when he bemoans the fact that people go processioning through our mem-

bership like commuters through a ferryboat. He sometimes remarks upon the discouraging feature that we raise up one company of workers after another—for churches elsewhere. Then his wife replies, "Why, isn't that what we are here for? Are we building West End Church or are we building the Kingdom of God?" Don't you see? Oh, there are so many ambitions that a minister never sees fulfilled. Nevertheless, if he thinks straight, he is well assured that he is daily moving on toward the fulfillment of his ambitions by some one at some time.

And this is the joy of it, and my third observation. No matter how long you wait for ambition to be realized, no matter by whom it is finally attained, it remains your ambition to the last. I admire a young man who is big enough to share his glory with others. In a big project there is always sufficient honor to go around. When David's dream-temple was completed an impressive dedication service was held. Solomon preached the sermon and it wasn't about Solomon, it was about David. He frankly said, "This is not my temple. I did not conceive this undertaking. You are looking upon the fulfillment of a life ambition—not mine, but David's. This is my father's work. The vision was my father's; the venture was his. So I ascribe the victory to him. My father set his heart upon this vast project knowing full well that he would not live to see it accomplished. But God said unto my father, 'Nevertheless, thou didst well that it was in thy heart.' And gathered here to-day we re-echo the sentiment. Let us return thanks to God for my

father." And the great audience was bathed in the hush of a prayer that washed away the dust of human littleness and opened the eyes to the indestructibility of a purpose nobly conceived, patiently pursued and humbly passed on for others to attain.

Tucked away on an inside page of a recent evening paper was a delicious morsel of sentiment. It was the story of a girl violinist who, having achieved considerable distinction on the other side, had come to New York to coach budding artists. She took up her abode among the studios of Union Square East. Here she played exquisitely every day upon her violin. A weary-looking little Jew, with soft and dreamy eyes, was wont to pass that way at the noon hour. He often paused to drink in the strains that dripped from her skilled bow upon the toilers surging to and fro beneath her window.

One Saturday afternoon, dressed in his best, he made his way into the artist's studio where he stood shy and speechless, presenting a pathetic picture of shrinking eagerness. The girl's gaze was kindly, almost inviting, but there he stood brushing his hat with his sleeve—his eyes resting upon a bas-relief of Chopin above the piano.

Then he spoke, softly, but very earnestly, "I am come, Miss, to ask that you teach me to play. I want —all my life—since I so little boy to play violin." Gathering courage the words now came tumbling over each other. "In Warsaw, I live near his house (pointing to Chopin). I think in day—I dream in night—how some day I get violin and I play. But we are so

poor." A shadow crossed his face at the memory. "And I never, never get violin."

He paused for breath, then rambled on, "I come to America when I was fifteen and I think I earn lot of money and buy violin and learn. But there were many relatives to bring over; my uncle he had good tailor shop and I sew—and sew—and time goes—and I never learn. Now—I—we—my wife and I, we will soon get a baby. Ten years we have been married but never have children till now. And I want—my wife want too, that our baby can play violin—grand. My wife think that if she hear much music she will love music and baby will get our hope. So, now, I have enough money—I want lessons, so I can play at home to her, and maybe—maybe.

"One day I hear you play. I listen and listen. I come often and stand down there in the street. I say she will teach me and my baby become great musician some day. You will, won't you, Miss?"

That was three months ago. Since then a youthful virtuoso, who confines herself to advanced pupils, has been doing her best to enable a little stooped man with his worn and stiffened fingers to recover a musician from the ashes of youthful dreams.

Does it require much imagination to see in the future an artist of first rank standing before an enraptured audience discoursing the quivering emotions so long pent up in a father's heart, in a mother's soul? Ah, friends, that is ambition. And anything short of that is a pipe-dream. An ambition like that of David's or like that of the little Jew is God-like.

Such, I believe, is the ambition of the singer whose

plaint, "I have wasted my money and my life," inspired this message. Perhaps she has not wasted either. Her unfulfilled ambition may be gloriously fulfilled in the little one God has placed in her arms. When I suggested as much the mother said very earnestly, "Yes, I know. And I am praying that some day my baby may realize my ambition."

Men and women, young and old, let me extend my hand to you in profound fellow feeling as I welcome you into the oldest fraternity on earth, the Society of Jesus. The insignia is a cross. The password is patience. The grip is the long hold. It is a society of men and women who dreamed such big dreams that they cannot be fulfilled in a single lifetime. But they have dreamed with God.

"Thou didst well that it was in thy heart."

XI

AN AWAKENING

"Your young men shall see visions." Acts 2:17.

Just now considerable anxiety is being voiced in public print over distressing lapses among young people. But dailies and monthlies do not tell the whole story. That there is another side to the story is evident from a letter which I received the other day. This letter is from an eighteen-year-old prep student. He has entered rather early upon a period of introspection and self-adjustment. He is seeking to find himself. He writes to his minister for counsel. I challenge any adult to write with more clear-cut self-analysis and spiritual understanding. This opportunity to look into the innermost thoughts of an up-to-the-minute youth has so cheered me that I must share the experience with others.

"I am seeking your counsel on a big question. Living very much alone for two or three years, I have faced many life questions and thought them through from barrenness to truth. Probably the greatest decision of all was that the purpose of life is to construct to the *utmost* of power. The big thing now is to find in what way I may do my utmost in constructive work, and it is upon this point that I would greatly appreciate your consideration.

"It seems to me that while the ideal is to give chief attention to constructive things, the immediate necessity is to destroy destructive things. I have come into contact with many destructive workers, who make it the object and delight of their lives to drag people down unawares. They meet little or no opposition, because they don't wear signs (or if they do they are misleading). I have seen several of these break down more religion and character in a little leisure time than you, Doctor, could probably build in many hours of teaching.

"I hate that,—recruiting for hell—I want to knock this filthy, underhanded stuff that is worm-eating the very best of our people. I want it to feel physical opposition. Why build up heaven with all hell tearing at your back, instead of fighting hell with all heaven at your back? Don't you clear the rocks off the field before you build, and is not construction therefore the ultimate and not the immediate call?

"I want to know in what direction to go and then get going. If I don't soon find out, my purpose may change, weaken, and harden, perhaps, for lack of an objective. This 'prepare and be ready for anything' doesn't quite work. I want to work toward a bright light of accomplishment. But I will not stake all on the future, for my brother and my father's brother were swept out of life just in their prime with nothing to show for their names but preparation and possibilities. We have a sign at the 'Y.' 'Don't wait till you're a man to be great; be a great boy.' I want to keep up a zest for living right now.

"You cannot know how much I will value anything you may say in reply to this."

How can any one be pessimistic about the future in the presence of such a youthful explosion? The rising generation is not likely to wreck the world, as some have feared. On the contrary they appear to have advanced the clock by an hour at least, thereby introducing daylight-saving into the realm of adolescence.

What would you say, in reply to such a letter?

Well, I will tell you what I have said.

Young man, you have caught the vision of the supreme task of life—construction. I congratulate you. Success awaits you, happiness and satisfaction attend you. Long and eagerly has the world been looking for you.

I once heard no less a person than President Butler, of Columbia, voice this eagerness. "This world, this modern world, abounds in architects of every type, but it sadly lacks builders. There are architects in social reform, achitects in religion, architects in philosophy, architects in institution building, and all of them with plans, some of them inviting, others even imposing and magnificent; but by the side of these architects how few are the builders."

"Probably the greatest decision of all," you write, "was that the purpose of life is to construct to the utmost of power." A wise decision. You are absolutely right. Fasten this purpose with a nail and in a sure place. Upon it you may safely hang every issue of

life. Constructive thinking and planning plus patient constructive effort will place you in the forefront of leadership and make your life count for time and for eternity.

In your attitude toward destructive workers you are less wise. You are militant, which is well. But avoid militarism, which is suicidal. Remember the fate of that other young man of the long ago, ablaze with the thought of swift accomplishment. Brilliant, popular, with a pronounced instinct for social betterment, he was all to be desired as young men go. Burning with righteous indignation on that fateful day Moses *saw red* and murdered an Egyptian slave-driver. It was an act of hotheaded impulsiveness. Once spent it left no good behind. It incurred suspicion among the very slaves he would have delivered. It delayed the dawn of social justice. Moses set the clock back forty years. The next time he struck at the wrong all was different. First he *saw God* which made him less disposed to see red. The vision of God must always be coupled with the vision of duty if one would be a power for good. True genius is finely poised between madness and inspiration. Remember this.

"Don't you clear the rocks of the field before you build?" you ask. No, I don't. Not if I am a builder. I let out that contract to those who appear to have a genius for tearing down. It is too dirty work for me. It callouses the hands of the skilled artisan. Besides, the pay is poor. In this attitude, I take my cue from nature. In living organisms the cells that build up

never tear down, and vice versa. So, I assume the same must be true of this social organism. Certainly Jesus did no tearing down. He left this to the processes of disintegration inherent within all wrong and devoted Himself exclusively to constructive teaching and effort. In other words "He built up heaven with all hell tearing at His back" (as you put it). And He has charged His followers to do likewise. Giving us, however, the blessed assurance that "the gates of hell shall not prevail."

Give yourself no anxiety about destructive workers. A wise providence has assigned to them their place and fixed the bounds thereof. "Thus far shalt thou go—and no further."

You could not get rid of them if you would, and you should not if you could. They are as necessary to the rearing of Christ's Kingdom dream as the constructive workers.

"I want to work toward a bright light of accomplishment." So you should and so you may. But remember this, if the accomplishment upon which you fasten your expectant gaze is such as might be achieved during your lifetime it is not worthy of you. Only little minds dream such dreams. Big men stake out their ambitions along eternal lines. They project their building plans into other lives, and into ages lying far beyond the horizon of "A Last Will."

Can you think of a single truly great man who has ever sat down with task finished to bask his soul in the "bright light of accomplishment?" Did Abraham, or Jesus, or Paul? Don't you see that you are putting

yourself out of the running when you set the ambition so low? How do you know that "your brother and your father's brother were swept out of life just in their prime with nothing to show for their names but preparation and possibilities?" Some day, when we stand with unclouded vision before the finished edifice, you may find it otherwise.

"Don't wait till you're a man to be great; be a great boy." Thus spake the "Y" and so say I. Great—as Jesus was great at twelve years of age; when the lure of life was His "Father's business." Great—as the Saviour was great upon the cross, when in the presence of what appeared to be utter failure He fixed His expiring gaze upon the capstone resplendent in eternal sunshine and said, "It is finished"—thereby hurling exultance into the teeth of His enemies, and into the jaws of death. According to the eleventh chapter of Hebrews, greatness is seeing a thing when others do not; carrying on when others are falling down. Is there a conceivable vision or purpose better calculated "to give us a zest for living right now?"

Naturally, such a vision as I have sketched with the pigments furnished by my young friend overwhelms one by the magnitude of its proportions. The task is stupendous. "Who, then, is sufficient for these things?" Who, indeed! But do men of constructive genius falter on that account? Not as we observe them on this material plane. When the projected building operation is too big for the builder he seeks a loan. He supplements his own resources with re-

serves which others have accumulated. He mortgages the present to the future.

In "ye are complete in Him" (Colossians 2:10) we have the spiritual equivalent for these financial underwritings. The inexhaustible resources embodied in the eternal life of Jesus are absolutely essential to any abiding constructive lifework. The vision of the Christ is even more important than the vision of the task. Fortunately my ambitious and earnest young friend knows this as well as his minister. He has access to the resources of the greatest insurance corporation in the universe. With such backing he need have no fear about undertaking the task of building his own unit in the "new social order." Notwithstanding his limited spiritual, moral and intellectual capital; notwithstanding the rapidly flitting hours of life's short day, he may rest assured that whenever he is compelled to lay aside plumb-bob and spirit level, hammer and trowel, the Master's "it is finished" will be upon his lips.

We have only to join our lives to Christ, and link up our vision with His to go joyously on with our work. No man on earth to-day is so great that he would not be millions of times richer, stronger, more efficient and more successful if he added himself to Christ. This done, he would be better able to meet his obligations and to float his political and economic credits. World reconstruction is held up because so many "big men" are bankrupt and hesitate about securing the much needed Divine underwriting.

The world is imperilled by incompleteness. By incomplete thinking—much of it second-hand; incom-

plete idealism—some of it half-baked; incomplete reforms—most of them superficial. Too bad! Too bad! And—it might be so different if men would only build ambitions, industries and nations with the same degree of intelligence that they display in building apartment houses and railroads. But, the future is not without promise so long as young and ambitious men, in increasing numbers, are awakening to this challenge of the larger life and are striking out for the shining heights of enduring accomplishment.

XII

THROWING AWAY HAPPINESS

"And the Lord God took the man whom He had made and put him in the Garden of Eden to dress and to keep it." GENESIS 2:15.

A great many folks wax noisy over their disbelief of the story of the Fall. Perhaps their intellectual difficulties are due to misunderstandings. Probably they have never really examined the story to see what it is all about. They have contented themselves with hearsay and their unbelief is therefore only second-hand.

It matters little, whether you regard the story as myth or as allegory or as actual history, it comes to the same thing in the end. It is the faithful portrayal of real life, the literary embodiment of human experience from which you cannot get away by any process of reasoning, by any rationalistic jugglery. All the essential facts of "the Fall" are here in every heart as truly as they were yonder in Eden.

What is the story all about? Well, to begin with, between the first verse of Genesis and the second verse there is an interval of time, no one knows how long. It may have been millenniums, it may have been only centuries. One guess is as good as another. The point is that within this interval a cataclysm had taken place, a stupendous catastrophe had overwhelmed the

race. Civilization and man, whatever they were before, are now in ruins.

With the second verse of Genesis God undertakes to erect a new world by "re-making" man. He proceeds to give man another chance. He begins to rewrite history. And this is the way He goes about it. He plants a garden of perfect happiness upon earth and He plants potential happiness within man. Whatever may be said against the story one must admit that the author displays inspired genius by eliminating the element of environment and getting right down to the essence of happiness—man himself. Here he is, this darling of the gods, in a garden containing everything that could possibly be desired. Satisfaction is here for eye, for emotion, for mind, for ambition. Not a blemish is anywhere to be found—no sin, no pain, no fear in the soul, no shame upon the cheek. He is monarch of all he surveys. God and man walk hand in hand in an intimacy unmatched.

Man starts a new order at zero, with freedom to choose between rising and falling moral temperature. He is no prisoner in this garden of happiness. He is a son, at liberty to go or to stay. If he stays he must improve his opportunities; if he squanders them he must go. There had to be choice if Adam was not to be a prisoner; there had to be right choice if he was to become a worthy son. And he deliberately throws away happiness and is banished from his delectable estate.

It is my purpose to lift this story bodily out of the Old Testament and set it down where we live. For our present discussion the Garden of Eden is New York. I shall attempt to show how men to-day are

throwing away happiness exactly as did Adam and Eve.

We deliberately throw away happiness when we take what *does not belong to us.* What was the tree of knowledge? Let the serpent answer: "In the day thou eatest of the forbidden tree thou shalt be as God." Adam's folly was in laying hands upon knowledge that was God's. This is something that does not belong to man and never will, the serpent to the contrary notwithstanding. You cannot take what belongs to another and successfully get away with it—at least not for long. Happiness is not thus to be obtained. Individuals have tried it, nations have tried it—to their sorrow. The serpent lied—he knew he lied—Adam and Eve also knew it, but too late. The knowledge they gained was not God's knowledge at all. God's knowledge of the difference between good and evil came by sacrificing the evil; Adam's knowledge came by sacrificing the good. The two are antithetical. God plucked His knowledge from the tree of life; Adam and Eve plucked their knowledge from the tree of death.

As a boy I was greatly mystified by the "forbidden fruit" part of the tale. To my youthful mind it seemed altogether wrong for God to place something before man which would tempt him to fall. Fortunately for my peace of mind there was a public park across the street from my parental home and a very wise father within that home. Between the two I got things straightened out to my complete satisfaction.

The park was our pride and continual delight. Although kept up by the city we called it "our park." And it was "ours" to enjoy, to roam through and to play in. But "forbidden" signs were everywhere—on the grass, in the flower beds, in the lily ponds and on the tree trunk. Those were the days when "keep off" meant keep off, even to city children. So it was not difficult for Father to show how the park *did* belong to us although it did not. The city bought the park for no other reason than that it might belong to every citizen of Wilmington. It was every man's, every woman's, every child's, to the extent that each citizen kept his hands off of what belonged to the city. Thus the happiness of all was conditioned upon the obedience of each. After Father's homily, we boys often called our park the Garden of Eden. A fundamental law of life had been inscribed upon the fleshly tablets of two youthful hearts—a law of universal application. There is much forbidden fruit in the garden of life. Whoever reaches up and plucks what does not belong to him deliberately throws away happiness.

We deliberately throw away happiness when we try to get it in a way that *conscience doth not approve.* Adam and Eve had no sooner taken what belonged to God than they knew their own nakedness. Conscience immediately lifted its voice in condemnation. Henceforth the whole garden was changed. The loving voice of God became something fearsome. A guilty heart makes a gloomy world—always. Nakedness of spirit is something that no amount of knowledge can cover. No man is great to his conscience.

Conscience is an unrelenting prosecutor. No garden of happiness is big enough to afford adequate hiding place from the eyes of the moral law. Misery pursues the mighty and the moneyed as persistently as it does the weak and the poor. We simply cannot break the moral law. If we try to break it, it will surely break us. The humblest man without a dollar in his pocket but with a clear conscience is happier than the proudest man despite all his wealth who has attained his ends in a way that the inner voice disallows. A conscience ridden man must live on dope or souse himself in intoxicating pleasure to sustain even a measurably tolerable existence. How well Shakespeare put the thought into the mouth of King Richard, "My conscience hath a thousand tongues and every tongue brings in a several tale and every tale condemns me as a villain." We throw away our happiness when we get it at the cost of conscience.

We throw away happiness when we try to get it *without any effort.* The trouble with Adam and Eve was they were lazy. God put them in the Garden to till and to dress it. If they had attended to the job in hand they would have gotten the knowledge they desired in a normal way—by working for it. God intended them to know the difference between good and evil. It was not His thought to deny their God-like cravings. If a creature may reverently venture to read the mind of the Creator, God's plans must have taken shape in some such form as this: "If these, my Spirit-children, will till the garden I will cause it to bring forth the fruit of knowledge in abundance."

The folly of these Spirit-children was that, not content to await the harvest time, they plucked knowledge before it ripened.

There is an instrument, held in sacred regard by most Americans, which declares, "that every citizen has the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." An excellent statement this is of the philosophy of Eden. Happiness is *pursuit,* nothing more, nothing less. It is not acquisition or possession or accumulation. Neither is it investment or investure or environment—except as incidental. It is quest, pursuit, growth, keeping-on-keeping-on.

To illustrate my point. I have a symphony organ which represents the slavings and the savings of seven long years. As a passionate lover of music it has been the regret of my life that I did not learn to play when I was young. When the self-player organs appeared I resolved to have one, cost what it might. For seven years I looked eagerly forward to the time when I would be able to sit down and execute the compositions of the great masters. Every dollar I saved represented many times its value in terms of personal happiness. The long-looked-for day arrived and the coveted instrument stood in my library. For several weeks I spent all my spare moments on the organ bench. I feasted my hungry soul and afflicted the neighbors—for it was early summer. Gradually I tired of music-by-the-yard, and played less and less. Then the organ remained closed for weeks at a time, then months. To-day that beautiful and expensive instrument peacefully reposes in a barn on my New Hampshire farm.

I find in talking to business men, that their experience is not unlike my own. They get more happiness out of making money than they do out of having it. It is the game, not the money, that affords the larger measure of happiness. What is money, after all? Nothing but glorified dirt. It is worth only so much as it will buy in temporal and political glory, which are worth in their turn only what they will buy of spiritual glory.

Adam and Eve wanted to get happiness without working for it. The old serpent deceived them with blandishments. "What is the use of tilling the garden? Why not reach out and take ripe fruit from God's tree?" Unfortunately for them and for us, when they did so they found it was not Life's tree but Death's. Happiness plucked before it is ripe invariably disagrees with human nature. When young people, impatient to make money, give up their schooling they deliberately throw away happiness. Half-baked lives do not bring much in any world market. The get-rich-quicks usually throw away happiness. Mere wealth is not happiness, as any one with half an eye can see. If it were, the face of the New Yorker would smile. But does it? Study the faces in the subway or on the "L." You can count the smiles of a single ride on the fingers of two hands. Stand at the head of Wall Street and study the faces of the hurrying, jostling crowds as they surge to and fro. How many of them reflect a really happy heart? Happiness there may be but it does not come to light until these men and women climb out of the golden current that has swept them madly on and on all day.

There is a proverb that runs thus: "It is the glory of God to conceal a thing; but the honor of kings is to search out a matter." Here is the touchstone of true happiness. Kipling has set the idea to rhythmic meter in his "Explorer."

"Till a voice as bad as conscience, rang interminable changes.

"Something hidden. Go and find it. Go and look behind the ranges.
Something lost behind the Ranges, lost and waiting for you. Go!
So I went, worn out of patience; never told my nearest neighbor—
Stole away with pack and ponies—left 'em drinking in the town;
And the faith that moveth mountains didn't seem to help my labors
As I faced the sheer main-ranges, whipping up and leading down.

"But at last the country altered—white man's country past disputing—
Rolling grass and open timber, with a line of hills behind—
Saul, he went to look for donkeys, and by God he found a Kingdom!
But by God, who sent His whisper, I had struck the worth of two!

Then, we throw away our happiness when we fail to provide *enduring foundation* for it. Happiness is not an airplant; it is an edifice. Our to-days and yesterdays are the blocks with which we build our to-morrows and our eternity. What's the use of building a new world, and what's the use of reconstruction if we

are only building upon quicksands. The Great Teacher classified all men as wise or foolish. The foolish build happiness upon sand, and when the rains descend and the flood comes and the winds blow, down it all topples and great is the fall thereof. Adam and Eve built upon sand when they might have built upon the rock of ages. There stood the tree of life in the center of that garden, a symbol of endurance—untouched. There is no evidence that they paid the slightest attention to that which would have made happiness abiding. God gave them the chance to put everlastingness beneath their paradisiacal estate, and the opportunity was thrown away. What fools we mortals be.

This is all rather sketchy but it is comprehensive. I have drawn an outline that each may readily fill in from his own experience. You will bear me witness that, save for a few minor details, this Genesis story is a faithful portrayal of human nature, as it is to-day. The Garden of Eden is right here in our midst. The Fall of Man is not an ancient fiction, it is a daily tragedy. And I am speaking in behalf of my Father who still walks in the garden calling men back to sanity and to Himself. Across the centuries is still heard the inescapable question: "Adam, where art thou?" There is no escape from this Voice. There is no hiding place from this Presence.

Will you continue to throw away your happiness? Will you deliberately spurn the very thing that you seek? Or will you conscientiously and patiently set about tilling and dressing the garden of Happiness?

Only do this and you shall have a right to the tree of life which in due time will be found also to be the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

The other evening a physician unfolded to me an interesting tale adorned with an excellent moral. A friend of his read somewhere that chickens lay more when lights are burned for an hour about midnight. So he installed a hundred-candle-power lamp in his hennery and turned it on every night, with gratifying results. Thinking it was morning the chickens came down from their roost and went to scratching. Egg production was largely increased. But here is the significant fact. When the incubating season arrived the tables were reversed. Out of eight hundred eggs put in the incubator only twenty-nine hatched. By careful test the eggs laid down were all equally fertile. Why then the disparity? Upon examination it was found that in all the eggs the chicks had matured and were well formed but the vast majority did not have the strength to pick their way out of the shell.

Is there a timely lesson here? Have we hit upon the reason why our Christian and patriotic ideals incubate into promising form only to remain supine through inanition? By force methods, by artificial instrumentalities, by strenuous strivings we have largely increased the material forms of happiness but in all too many instances spiritual vitality has been so sapped by the process that men have not had strength to pick their way out of the shell of superficiality into the fullness of a happy life.

XIII

WHOSE IS IT?

"Who then is that trustworthy steward whom the Lord shall entrust with all His possessions?" LUKE 12:42.

Is not the church laying too much emphasis upon giving? If giving money is such an essential part of Christian life, how do you account for it that so few texts in the New Testament enjoin giving?"

Such was the question propounded the other day by a prominent layman who was deploring the financial drives of various kinds.

My answer was, "Very little is said about giving for the obvious reason that man has so very little to give. There is but one thing I know of that man may truly call his own—the will."

Surprise is in store for any student who will take a Bible concordance and carefully examine all the references under give, giving and gave, so far as they embrace transactions between God and man. He will find, out of several hundred, barely more than a baker's dozen in which man appears as the giver, and then only by indirection. According to the Old and New Testaments God is the giver; man receives and invests. The cattle upon a thousand hills are His; all the silver

and gold are His. Aye, and we are His. This is the unmistakable teaching of the Word of God.

Moreover, innumerable embarrassing questions will confront the investigator, such as these: Who gave thee power to get wealth? What hast thou that thou didst not first of all receive? "God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that He is Lord of heaven and earth, needeth not anything, seeing He giveth to all life and breath and all things."

Stewardship is the dominant note in the Bible—stewardship of life, talents, means. This also was the controlling idea in the life of Christ from earliest boyhood —"Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" And the disciples, following the example of their Lord, were so obsessed with the idea of stewardship that they counted naught that they had their own but held all things in common. Why, then, did this first experiment in communism fail? For the reason that the disciples shirked *personal stewardship* for the more easy divided responsibility of collective stewardship. Had each man willingly and with reasonable intelligence administered for himself the gifts with which God had entrusted him a very different story would have flashed forth from the pages of apostolic history.

Concerning the use and disposition of money Christ had more to say than upon almost any other phase of Christian casuistry. I will not attempt to go into this more fully assuming an average acquaintance with the history of that inspired life. Suffice it to say it was no idle curiosity or spirit of Paul Pry that impelled

Jesus to sit over against the treasury and watch the assembling worshipers deposit their contributions in the many money chests that stood beside all doors of the sanctuary. Undoubtedly the burden upon His heart that Sabbath day was the same as that reflected in the question of our text, "Who then is that trustworthy steward whom the Lord shall entrust with all His possessions?"

It is kingdom building of which Jesus is here speaking. He seeks to convey to every disciple the tremendous, albeit inspiring thought that the Kingdom of God on earth will tarry only until such time as God finds a sufficient number of men whom He can trust with money. Manifestly until God can trust man with money He can trust him with few other blessings of the Kingdom age.

"Money the Acid Test" is the title of a searching book by my friend, Mr. McConaughy. It certainly *is* the acid test. Scripture reveals it to be the acid test of character, of sincerity, of patriotism, of religion. By this test one nation after another has been found wanting. Read the epitaph which one of the last of the Hebrew prophets inscribes upon the tomb of disappointing and disappointed Israel: "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation." Israel sinned away her day of opportunity. She received the gifts of God and claimed them as her very own. She declined to be God's trustee nation and deliberately appropriated to

herself all of the trust funds. This is a matter of history which none may gainsay.

Also by the acid test of money individuals have been repeatedly found wanting. Witness the rich young ruler whom Jesus loved. Witness also Christ's story of the farmer who, forgetting the Divine Giver and the honored and responsible office unto which the Giver has called him, views his possessions after a fashion sadly familiar to us. He talks of *my* barns, *my* goods, *my* fruits. So God discharges him, "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee. Then whose shall these things be?" In view of these and many other instances that might be adduced one will appreciate better the profound wisdom of the Master's observation, "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God."

The bright spot of the text is this; whenever and wherever God finds a trustworthy steward He takes him into partnership and entrusts him with more. Glorious thought this for individual and for nation: "Whom the Lord shall entrust with all His possessions." We would have more did we but show more capacity, greater integrity. God is building up His kingdom out of His treasury staff—which, thank God, is enlarging every year, every day.

Mr. Business-Man, is not this your method of procedure? Have you not built up your organization out of the trustworthy material which has grown up within the ranks of the enterprise? He would be a foolish business-man indeed who would think to erect a going business upon employees who make way with the

funds. By exactly the same method God is building His kingdom enterprise. "Honesty is the best policy" not alone in business but in grace as well. No line of sophistry talk, no juggling of figures, will bring about the answer to our prayer "thy kingdom come." But integrity and industry, glorified by inspiration and consecration certainly will.

This is a day of testing for the church of God. Be not deceived. The issues of the hour are clear cut, unmistakable. Man's attitude to money determines his attitude to God and to his fellowman. To humblest workman and to proudest capitalist there must come a change of mind and heart. The money is not ours, no matter how hard we work for it, how fast we nail it down, how we label it. The distress of these days is almost wholly due to money madness. We are scarcely better in our day and generation than the rich young ruler "who went away sorrowful," notwithstanding his great possessions.

Complaint is made that the rich are growing richer and the poor poorer. But that is not the trouble. The trouble is not that the poor have less but that we all want more: not that the rich are richer but that they are sicker. "Wealth should be called ill-th," observed Ruskin.

"The love of money is the root of all evil," declares the wise old Book. No argument is needed to prove that theorem. We have only to look about us and behold the highwayman spirit infesting every avenue of trade, of commerce, of finance, of statesmanship.

Let us be honest; first with the facts, then with God,

then with ourselves. Then the brotherhood of man will be at least conceivable.

Without doubt the world is at the parting of the ways—particularly the Christian world. The response of Christian men and women, aye, and Christian nations, to the challenge of the great altruistic movements of the day will largely determine the future for organized Christianity and for organized society.

Our attitude towards money is to determine whether we are to lose what we have or whether we are to be entrusted with more. "From him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he seemeth to have."

Pressing the matter a little closer; is all this clamor for a better world honest or is it hypocritical? Is the new social conscience fact or fiction? Are the gifts we offer upon the altar of repentance genuine, or is there a string to every one? Louis, the XI, solemnly executed a deed conveying the whole country of Boulogne in France to the Virgin Mary. But he reserved for himself all *revenues*. How characteristically modern!

In fine, we are now deciding whether our money is to buy more trouble or more effective munitions of mercy; if the former, God pity us, if the latter, the crowning day is coming by and by.

I have great expectations for the days just ahead of us. Many and striking are the signs of promise. I venture to say there was never a time when men of means realized their stewardship as they do to-day. Mr. Carnegie was not alone in the feeling "to die rich is to die dishonored." Only the other day a distin-

guished judge addressed a vast assembly in a Western city upon the theme, "The Lord's Three Hundred Million." One may easily imagine the trend of his remarks from this very striking and significant topic. Witness one of the richest young men of the day going forth with a "flying squadron" for a swing around the circle of principal American cities with an appeal to people of large and small means to dedicate their substance unto the Lord.

There is absolutely nothing too great for the church of God to attempt. She has the men, she has the means, she has the message, she has the motive. To win a great war the government was forced to turn to the church and kindred agencies for the means wherewith to fill the war chest and for the men with ability to organize democracy.

Men and women—you who bear the name of Christ, let me say very frankly that the world of to-morrow is going to take the road into which the Christian men of to-day turn. The herd instinct is abroad and is waiting for visionful leadership. At the present moment this leadership is sadly wanting. Statesmen have proved themselves incapable of it, as have mere reformers both radical and conservative. Can Christianity measure up to the opportunity? Is she able to rise to this leadership. Not unless she gives evidence of her sincerity by enduring the acid test and by a Godly example of trustworthiness and unselfish service.

It was by acid that George Peabody was tested and found to be pure gold. It came about on this wise. One busy day his office was entered by a canvasser

who asked him to contribute to the fund he was raising for an orphanage. The banker tried in vain to get rid of him. Finally he wrote a check for one hundred dollars. "Oh, thank you, Mr. Peabody." Then with a look of disappointment the visitor added, "We had you down for a thousand. We were sure, sir, that you would subscribe not less than that amount." The banker was visibly nettled as he replied, "Well, you had me down wrong." After some adroit talking the solicitor departed with a compromise check for five hundred.

What followed has been frankly told by the banker himself. He went home but not to sleep. All night long that five hundred dollars tormented him. "I don't remember which I was madder at, myself or my unwelcome caller." By daylight he had come to the conclusion that there was something wrong with a rich man when the giving of five hundred dollars to a worthy cause could give him such a restless night. For the first time he realized what a cold and deadly grip money had upon his soul. He resolved to break that grip once and for all by sending an additional five hundred to the fund. Again he had a bad night. He walked the floor. He endeavored to compose himself with a book. By no expedient was he able to throw off the feeling of chagrin at having been enslaved by money, or rid himself of the sense of obligation that now gripped him. "It was the hardest battle of my life, but I fought it through to a victory." He did, indeed. For, three days after the eventful call at his office, George Peabody, with exulting heart, sent the orphanage a check for ten thousand dollars. He had

learned the joy of giving. He had found the one thing needful. He became one of the greatest philanthropists the world has ever known. His benefactions are scattered all over the earth, in London, in Paris, in Berlin, in Canada, and in this country.

Speaking from my pulpit some time since Dr. G. Campbell Morgan told of a letter received by him from a soldier in the trenches of France, wherein is expressed utter horror at the waste of God's money when it might have been used to far better advantage. In bringing the letter to a close the writer unburdened his soul thus: "When I get back to England and hear any man say, when challenged to perform some big service for Christ and humanity, 'We cannot afford it,' I shall feel like hauling off and knocking him down. We can't afford it—indeed? If we cannot afford to invest our money in constructive and life-saving measures then in heaven's name how can we afford to invest it in death and damnation?"

My brethren, have done with the thought of "giving." "Invest" is the New Testament word. In our administration of the money with which God has entrusted us there must be more trust and greater trustworthiness. The sooner impulsiveness gives place to conscientiousness, the sooner will there be a genuine revival of religion, prosperity, patriotism, and lasting peace.

God forbid that I should judge my brother. I may judge myself—and I do. But there was once a Judge who sat over against God's treasury, where He has remained seated ever since. Some day He will sit

upon a judgment seat with account books opened before Him. The thought gives me pause—it searches me and humbles me. God grant that the verdict may be, "Thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things." Of this at least I am sure; if in this life I've truly formed a partnership with God there will be no disappointments.

Inscribed upon the cornerstone of the Theological Seminary, in Nanking, China, is the following noble sentiment:

"This building is the gift of
Miss Mary Myrtle Warren,
of Beatrice, Nebraska, U. S. A.,
a young woman whose fortune is dedicated to
the triumphs of Christianity in all lands.
In the name of the Divine Giver,
of Him who taught us how to use life's gifts."

I beseech you, brethren, to write some such dedication as this upon the cornerstone of your life. In the perpetual controversy with greed and self may we be found on the right side.

"Who then is that trustworthy steward whom the Lord shall entrust with all His possessions?"

XIV

"YOU CAN'T FOOL GOD"

"Is it not enough that you have wearied men, will ye weary my God also?" ISAIAH 7:13.

An exceedingly instructive bit of history this from which the text is chosen. Briefly, it is the story of a Godless King, who speaks pious words. In the colloquy recorded, Ahaz appears to better advantage than Isaiah. Not that Ahaz was altogether bad. History permits the assertion that this king had some excellent qualities. Although an idolater, at times he espoused the true religion. We may even strain a point in our zeal to do him full justice, and class Ahaz among the average men of the world, who talk in a beautiful and pious way about religious matters. As such he furnishes us an excellent study.

Let us step back a little from the context that we may gain a proper perspective of the man. Elsewhere (2 Chron. 28: 5, 6) we learn that King Ahaz has been twice defeated; once by the Syrians and once by the Israelites. Emboldened by their victories, these nations unite in an effort at extermination. The chapter opens with a picture of the united forces laying siege to Jerusalem. "The king's heart was moved, and the heart of his people, as the trees of the wood are

moved with the wind." Verse 2 indicates the state of panic within the royal city, occasioned by the siege. Every one is in trepidation; all are pessimistic. No, not all; the preacher keeps his head. The value of one man of faith in a great crisis is here exemplified. God directs His servant, Isaiah, to proceed at once to the king with a message of assurance and an offer of deliverance. The terms are the simplest possible. Ahaz is to break his alliance with a heathen power and commit his entire case to God. When God's message of salvation is delivered, Isaiah detects the shadow upon the countenance of the king, which he interprets as doubt, and he presses upon Ahaz the importance of faith—"If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established." (Verse 9) But the shadow lingers and God directs the preacher to give the hesitating king a crutch for his weak faith. "Ask thee a sign of the Lord, thy God; ask it, either in the depth, or in the height above." (Verse 11) Elaborated somewhat the preacher is saying: "You are doubting God's willingness or His ability to accomplish this great deliverance. If so, prove Him; ask of Him a sign; seek from Him some token—let it be anything you wish, ask it in the realm above you, or the realm about you that you may know His servant is holding out no false hope." Oh, the patience of God with one who stands undecided upon the threshold of salvation.

But it is not a question of doubt; it is a matter of self-surrender. Isaiah has drawn a chalk line and Ahaz is determined he will not cross it. He dare not risk God's displeasure by a flat refusal of salvation, so he resorts to a sanctimonious excuse: "I will not ask

(for a sign), neither will I tempt the Lord." (Verse 12). These words sound well; they make it appear that Ahaz's faith needs less bolstering than Isaiah's. The prophet, however, is too keen a reader of human nature to be deceived by such sanctimoniousness; he knows perfectly well that Ahaz is merely evading decision. We may imagine that it is with some degree of righteous indignation that he speaks out the words of the text, "Is it not enough that you weary men, will you weary my God also?" If I may descend to modern paraphrasing, Isaiah's remark is this: "You make me tired, with your insincere piety." In that hour of evasion, when the messenger of God stood before the besieged king, pressing upon him God's offer of salvation upon terms of immediate self-surrender, the fate of Jerusalem was decided for more than two thousand years. The text suggests two very practical thoughts which have direct and personal application.

Observe that men remain unsaved and outside of the church chiefly because they evade God's offer of salvation. When the offer is made, how many can you find who will make bold to say: "I do not want to be saved"? Few, indeed. Who is not expecting to be saved some time? To a certain point, in the effort at soul-winning, the minister's work is not difficult. When he declares that the citadel of life is besieged by a strong alliance of temptation, habit, sin and ruin; that of himself man cannot lift the siege; that God only is able to deliver the soul from death, the eyes from tears and the feet from falling, there is almost universal approval from the pew. It would seem to be a work

of supererogation to spend much time in an effort to convince an audience of average intelligence of the truth of such statements. The most unrepentant sinner will follow the minister to this extent. But, just at the point of decision the battle is lost, as Isaiah lost it. Very clearly did Ahaz realize the danger of his situation and the impending doom of the city. When, however, the line was drawn by the prophet and the panic-stricken king was asked to step over the line to God and to deliverance, he evaded the issue and sought to hide himself under the pious reply, "I will not ask for a sign, neither will I tempt God." What a flimsy covering for a godless heart. Not reverence, but rebellion, prevented Ahaz from stepping out from beneath the cloud into the sunlight of God's loving favor and deliverance. Sanctimonious excuses! They have covered the shame of none and have lured thousands upon thousands to their ruin.

After receiving the most explicit instructions to destroy utterly Agag, king of Amalekites, both men and women, oxen and sheep, camels and asses, King Saul obeyed only in part and spared the best of the sheep and oxen and lambs and all that was good. So great was God's displeasure that he sent the prophet Samuel to meet the returning conqueror with a well-merited reproof. But the sinner did not wait for the preacher to deliver his message. As soon as Saul saw Samuel, his conscience reproved him. A guilty conscience needed no accuser. Hoping to cover his own confusion and throw sand into the preacher's flashing eyes, the king began some pious talk: "Blessed be thou of the Lord; I have performed the commandment of the

Lord." Quick as a flash Samuel tore away the mask of insincerity: "What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?" And the conscience-smitten king is again ready with a pious answer. "The people spared the best of the sheep and of the oxen to sacrifice unto the Lord." Here is a double evasion. He throws all the blame upon *the people* and justifies his own disobedience on the ground that it was for a good purpose. Brushing aside the sanctimonious excuses, Samuel drives the sword of truth straight home in the words, "To obey is better than sacrifice. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, He has also rejected thee from being king." (1 Sam. 15).

And what is the immediate application of these citations? This: Men are to-day evading the direct appeal of the pulpit by just such sanctimonious excuses. As a way out of his dilemma the unsurrendering hearer tells the minister that God is too good and loving to permit any one to be lost. Think you God is flattered by such compliments from one who can stand unmoved beneath the thunderings of Sinai and the darkness of Golgotha? The excuse is a mere evasion, and the Saviour's answer to it is this: "Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I confess before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven." (Matt. 10:32) Who does not know that in the gift of His Son God has done all that

He can to save the world, and He now leaves every one to settle the matter for himself whether he will or will not enter the wide-open door of salvation?

Another apology: "I realize my need, and I am trusting in Christ as my Saviour, but I am not good enough to join the church." A sanctimonious excuse; almost never anything but an evasion of what is known to be the path of duty. Any honest man, well-versed in the Bible, and observant of present-day conversions, knows well enough the speciousness of such pious talk. To whom did Christ's call come? Let the Saviour answer for Himself: "I came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance." From which it follows that the greater yours is the louder is Christ's call to you to accept salvation and come into His church.

Again, some one evades the direct appeal of the pulpit in such words as these: "I realize my need of salvation, but I must not join the church; I fear I may bring reproach upon Christ and His cause." They say a poor excuse is better than none; but surely this is not even a poor excuse. Turn anywhere you will in the story of the earthly life of our Lord and note how this reproach was the very thing which Christ courted. Over and over again did the Pharisees call Jesus the friend of publicans and sinners. A church that can harbor a Saul of Tarsus, a vacillating Peter, a sinning Mary, a dying thief and a perfidious Judas will not suffer much from the addition of even so great a sinner as you represent yourself to be.

Or the evasion may take this form: "I cannot think of giving Christ this wreck of a life, this bankrupt character. I must bring forth fruits meet for repent-

ance. I must lay up some treasures of good deeds, holy thoughts, high resolves, before I can entertain the hope of becoming a church member." Believe me, my hearer, your reasoning is wrong. "All the fitness He requireth is to feel your need of Him." Should you defer this important step for twenty years (which God grant you may not), you would then be in the same frame of mind as at present, and would come into Christ's church as all other true seekers, with such words as these upon your lips:

> "Nothing in my hands I bring,
> Simply to Thy cross I cling,
> Naked, come to Thee for dress,
> Helpless, look to Thee for grace;
> Vile, I to the fountain fly,
> Wash me, Saviour, or I die."

Away with such excuses! They are not a whit more sincere or germane than the pious babble of the unrepentant and willful Ahaz.

Every excuse is an evasion, when one stands before the open door of salvation upon whose arch is carved in everlasting letters the unconditioned invitation, "Whosoever will may come."

The other thought suggested by the text is this: In these evasions of the pew lie the chief discouragement to the pulpit. The charge is often made that the minister no longer preaches the Gospel. Is it not more generally true that the hearers evade the Gospel? The pulpit thunders against sin and calls upon the sinners to repent, and those in the pew console themselves with

the reflection that, quite probably, the preacher has upon his heart the poor wretch in the slums or the heathen in a remote land.

In preparing a narrative upon the state of religion for presentation to Presbytery, I was greatly interested in some of the replies which pastors sent in answer to this question: "What are the chief discouragements to the work in your field?" The pastor in one of our best churches expressed the disappointment of his own heart in these words: "The chief discouragement in this field is that there are no sinners." This pastor was voicing the sentiment of the clergy as a whole.

How often in public address and private conversation you have been led, step by step, to the very verge of decision only to waver and fall back upon some pet excuse quite as flimsy as that offered by King Ahaz. Prayer, entreaty, encouragement have been resorted to, without avail. One communion succeeds another; the years stand in long line dreading the time when they must witness against you; a multitude of unimproved opportunities, like rejected angels, are weeping their entreaty beside the portal of salvation, but the same excuses are heard, you remain unmoved. Is it not enough to tax the patience of any one? Well may a pastor join in the lament of Jesus: "We have piped unto you and you have not danced, we have mourned unto you and ye have not lamented."

After all, of what use are excuses? They neither justify your indecision, nor hide your true motives. You are not deceiving God by elaborate apologies, nor are you deceiving your minister, nor yet are you

deceiving yourself. No need that one shall tell you it is not the excuse over which you stumble, but the will. You know perfectly well that it is not unfitness that keeps you out of the church, but unwillingness. Is it not enough that you have wearied your minister, who, since your childhood, has pleaded with you to give your heart to God? Will you weary God also? Is it not enough that you have wearied a devoted Sabbath School teacher, whose advice and love have followed you through the years? Will you weary God also? Is it not enough that you have wearied a godly father, and a praying mother, both of whom have crossed the threshold of the stars? Will you weary God also? Angels weep! that we should lead men to the very gates of paradise only to see them turn away and rush on to destruction.

Are we to understand that God is wearied by our long delay? Verily, yes; but never to the point of turning His back upon any sinners who will come to Him. The father may give up in despair, the mother may cease all effort, save prayer, the minister may pronounce you a hopeless case, but Christ will follow you with His yearning until death shall have closed forever the door of opportunity.

Some years ago I brought into my household an orphaned boy of about twelve. His father and mother had been early friends of mine. Raised on a farm, the lad had never before seen a city. To tell of my experiences during the first few weeks would be amusing, but I pass that by as having nothing to do with our present discussion. During the months that followed

a strong attachment developed between us. The boy was never more happy than when in my company. We would sit by the hour and talk over his studies, his pleasures, and his ambitions for the future. But one day I thought I detected a change in the lad. I endeavored to dismiss the suspicion from my mind, but it persisted. There could be no doubt about it, something had disturbed our tender relations. Naturally enough, in seeking an explanation, I sent my memory back over the path of the yesterdays in search of some blunder or oversight upon my part, but could recall nothing which would furnish an explanation of the boy's behavior. After assuring myself that I had not changed in my attitude towards him, I began as tactfully as possible to study my ward. Whenever I talked with him his eyes sought the ground; when I took him out walking, he lagged behind; when I invited him to bring his books into my study (which had been his former delight) he excused himself, and finally, for various reasons, he did not find it convenient to join me at mealtime. At my wit's end, I finally sought out his day-school teacher, who informed me that he had been very naughty. Having apprised myself of all the facts, I called the boy into my study. At first he would not enter, but stood with his feet in the crack of the door, thus preparing himself for a hasty retreat should occasion demand. But, I reassured him by saying that he need have no fear of me since I would always remain his true and kind friend. When he was seated opposite to me I began our conference with a few leading questions; had I been unkind to him at any time? had I denied him any legitimate pleasure? had

I overlooked his needs? was he feeling well? etc.

Then I closed in upon him with my questions, and little by little I drew forth the confession, and then the tears, and then a perfect storm of repentance which broke me up quite as much as it did the lad. But when it was all over and the full confession had been made to me and reparation had been made to the teacher in the shape of a note of apology, the clouds broke, and through the tears I could see the sunshine. Immediately, the boy was himself again, and we were upon the same terms of intimacy as before. As he sat before me that evening, giving me, sentence by sentence, the story of his guilt, which I already knew, I thought I understood, as never before, the great importance of a confession of one's sins to Christ and of public acknowledgement of Him as Saviour. Christ yearns to have you draw near to Him, but so long as you excuse yourself from the confession, which must be made before forgiveness can be granted, there will remain a wide gulf of separation.

Oh, the patience of Christ, who can measure it? When man refused to crown Him King of his life, Jesus took the thorns and crowned Himself monarch in the Kingdom of Disappointment; when man declined to lay hold of those outstretched hands of mercy, Jesus spread them forth and nailed them to the cross in everlasting testimonial that "Whosoever will may come;" when man spurned the love that paid the price of sin, Jesus opened His side and revealed to the world a broken heart.

XV

THE CRY FROM THE DEEP

"Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and He bringeth them out of their distresses. He maketh the storm a calm, He bringeth them to their desired haven." PSALM 107:28.

Not long since a certain Line set out to build the biggest, safest, strongest ship in the world. Hundreds of workmen were engaged. The best minds, the best skill were drafted for the project. Months rolled on into years before the leviathan was completed at a cost of seven million, five hundred thousand dollars. She was the last word in ship building. Equipped with every conceivable device for safety and comfort of passengers and crew, she was heralded far and wide as the first absolutely non-sinkable ship. And appearance justified the boast. Stability and security were written in every line and dimension. She was 882 feet in length and 92 feet in breadth. She measured 105 feet from keel to the top of the captain's bridge. She was 90 feet out of water when loaded at 66,000 tons displacement.

And then she put proudly to sea with band playing, flags fluttering, and passenger list of more than fifteen hundred; her maiden voyage had begun. Sailing out of the harbor she proclaimed her superiority to the world from an exalted bow upon which was the single

word "Titanic." Passengers, crew and an onlooking world were full of the spirit of the occasion. Many had crossed to the other side that they might enjoy the honor and the pleasure of this premier voyage of the greatest ship afloat. Into sunlight she steamed at record-breaking speed, with laughing heart in bright expectation of long years of service to human well-being. The voyage was almost ended—the captain's banquet and the brilliant last-night-out ball were over; all was silent but for the pulsebeat of mighty engines.

It was a wonderful night,—starlit sky, glassy sea, crisp atmosphere. Suddenly a white specter arose out of the deep and, extending a long arm, drew a knife-like blade of ice from stern to stern, cutting out the bottom of the ship. There had been no jar so there was little alarm. Men and women joked as picking up gleaming bits of ice from the deck they passed them around, souvenirs of the Titanic's first victory over the forces of nature.

But—the ship's proud head began to droop. Banter gave place to anxiety which officers sought to allay. "Have no fear. No harm can come to us on such a night, on such a sea, on such a ship. The Titanic is unsinkable." But slowly the bow drooped lower and lower in humiliation and defeat. And within one hour the Titanic plunged head first to her grave in the deep.

Such is life's proud boast; so endeth man's short dream of greatness and power. Thus hapless and helpless is the strongest as the weakest in the iron grip of forces second only to God Himself in power. In this single tragedy of the deep I find a parable of every life.

For life is a sea.
Its ships are these poor bodies, strong or frail,
Faith constitutes the anchor, hope the sail,
While reason is the pilot at the wheel.
The sins that we must shun are rocks and reefs,
Our troubles are the storms that cause us grief.
While this immortal soul that God has given
Is but one passenger en route for heaven.

Our text voices the utter helplessness of man in the grip of an inescapable crisis. Whoever wrote this psalm had surely been to sea. How graphic it is.

"They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters;

"These see the works of the Lord, and His wonders in the deep.

"For He commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof.

"They mount up to heaven, they go down again to the depths; their soul is melted because of trouble.

"They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wit's end.

"Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble and He bringeth them out of their distresses."

In no calling is knowledge more exact than in the life of the seafaring. From mathematical calculations to the tying of a knot the sailor must be accurate. He must know the language of the heavens, the flight of the stars, the moods of the deep and last, but by no means least, human nature. Man is at his best when he stands on the bridge successfully navigating his craft through fog and storm to some far-away port.

Sailors have little patience with theories. Experience —life-long experience is the honored school-master of the craft. Any theory may do for landlubbers, but not for those "that go down to the sea in ships."

Notwithstanding this exact knowledge how utterly helpless are officers and crew in the grip of an awful calamity. Size of the vessel affords no security. Rank of office guarantees no immunity. Length of service counts for little or nothing. Ofttimes the highest officer, the wisest navigator and the biggest ship are first to succumb.

'Tis even so in the voyage of life. Solomon, the wise, cried as loudly, "Out of the depths I cry unto thee, O God" as did Peter, the fisherman, "Lord, save me, I perish!" David, the King, and Jonah, the preacher, confess their helplessness in identically the same words, "All Thy waves and Thy billows have gone over me."

I am aware that there are those who will not admit this helplessness of man. So much the worse for them. This but proves they have never launched out into the deep; they have never exposed themselves in vast zones of danger where only faith survives. As for us, the text depicts extremity that we have known often and all too well.

Aye, and the text does more. It offers an assurance we would pass on to others. It is this: Although helpless man is by no means hopeless. "They cry— He delivereth."

"He delivereth them out of all their distresses."

I would have you note the oft-repeated "He." *He*

bringeth them out of their distresses. *He* maketh the storm a calm. *He* bringeth them to the desired haven. It is God who walks the billows by which man is overwhelmed. Seeing whom the Psalmist adds, "Oh, that men would praise the Lord for His goodness."

Wrote Mr. Emerson, "O friend, never strike sail to fear. Come into port greatly, or sail with God the seas. Not in vain you live, nor yet alone. For every eye is cheered by the vision of Him." Have you this vision, my friend?

I close my eyes and see Him yonder upon the sea of Galilee. "Contrary winds" engulf the disciples; sailors are at their wits' end. And then He comes!—the Son of Man. His very coming alarms, until He calls across the heaving billows, "It is I, be not afraid." And as I look I seem to feel myself a sailor in that boat, for often thus He has come to me.

Again I close my eyes and see another little ship upon the same sea. This time Jesus is on board—asleep. The men row hard to bring the ship to land, for winds are contrary. Again I hear a cry of helplessness, "Master, carest Thou not if we perish?" Indeed He cares, and forthwith delivers them out of all their distresses, bidding wind and waves to subside.

Account for this Divine interposition as you will, incredulous one. Tell us the storm was less without than within the hearts of the sailors; that Jesus simply stilled fears and not the tempest. The explanation does not satisfy. You have yet to account for the most striking feature of the New Testament narrative, remarked upon by those on board that stormy

night. "What manner of man is this that even the *wind* and the *sea* obey him?" The psalmist believed that God hath power to calm any ocean, to tame any blow; so did the disciples, and so do I.

For thousands of years this psalm has proclaimed that there is a Divine Helper upon whom one may call in any storm. I would proclaim it again. I am addressing navigators who have known stormy voyages. Waves of unrest have tossed you about. You have been repeatedly driven from the course by winds of doctrine and deceits of men. You have been buffeted by storms of passion. Some of you have drifted into church much crippled; prayer's wireless long since went overboard, Bible chart in tatters, compass injured, needle of conscience no longer to be relied upon; faith's anchor was broken in some gale you barely weathered. Every faculty of your being has at one time or another mutinied. Time and again reason has proved a mistaken pilot, bringing you more than once to the verge of shipwreck. Have you cried unto God? He is there! He walks the sea of life to-day as He walked the waves of old Gennesaret. We cry—He delivers.

The Radio Pilot is something quite new in nautical science. But he is as old as mother nature—only man has not hitherto made his acquaintance. During the recent naval maneuvers in southern waters this Radio Pilot navigated an obsolete battleship, used as a target by American gunners. An amazing story it is—of a great ship sailing on and on, without a human being

on board, guided by invisible waves from a far-off master-ship.

Even more wonderful things are in store, the Naval Board informs us. We are told of the perfection of a Radio Pilot which will soon steer any ship through the San Francisco Channel, in the densest fog and the darkest night. Upon approaching this harbor the officer upon the bridge will step aside and turn over the wheel to an invisible and mysterious hand which will safely pilot the vessel through the Golden Gate to safe anchorage within the quiet harbor.

When science promises such marvelous things, shall we doubt that God has power to pilot a helpless soul amidst storm and stress and fog through the golden gate of a simple Christian faith to safe anchorage within the harbor of peaceful deliverance?

As I look out upon the audience before me I think of the influence that brought you sailing into this peaceful bay of Sabbath worship. How did it happen? What hand was on the wheel? I have a feeling that a Divine Radio Pilot stood upon the bridge. God guided you. You set out for a Sunday morning walk. You found yourself in church. You just "dropped in." Ah, but did you? You had not been in church for years, but this being Mothers' Day you thought you ought to go. God brought you. All unrealized by you, radio influences from the Heavenly Father directed your footsteps. He who gave the minister his message designed that you should hear it. In a moment you will sail out. Immortal Spirit, I "speak you"—Ship ahoy! Take on the Pilot. It is my hope

and prayer that many may be led by this message to say, "The unseen Pilot's hand is upon me, though I knew it not. I am resolved to go forth in humble and willing acceptance of His guidance."

"Jesus, Saviour, pilot me, over life's tempestuous sea." Make this, my hearer, your cry from the deep.

XVI

LIFE IN THE OPEN

"Can any understand the noise of His tabernacle?" Job 36:29.

In mythology we are told of a very wonderful building somewhere betwixt heaven and earth. The walls are of resounding brass. A thousand entries and windows are concealed from human sight by glorious foliage. There are no doors to shut, so they stand open night and day. Through the many openings all sounds of earth and every word that is spoken enter, and the discord roareth every way, then passeth out through the apertures by which they entered, ascending to Olympus as entrancing harmony, well pleasing to the gods.

What a pity this ancient fantasy is not a present-day reality! How unfortunate that the Bible contains no corresponding conception! Ah, but this extraordinary building *is* a reality, and we find it described in even greater detail in the Word of God. What is more, we discover that its location is not so remote as the ancients thought. The building is well within the border of our work-a-day world. So follow me, if you will, that I may lead you into a dwelling-place of God, where every jarring note of a discordant life may be transformed into melody.

A tabernacle, Elihu calls it. The allusion is to

nature—God's great out-of-doors. "Can any understand the noise of his tabernacle?" Much depends upon the answer one is able to make to the question.

1. Job was in great trouble, consequently sore perplexed. Having lost property, loved ones and health all in a twinkling, he finds himself plunged into that tangled woodland of speculation well known to the afflicted. He must find his way out into the clearing. Being a good man, he first turns to theology for comfort, and theology breaks down under the weight of so great and undeserved woe. Quite naturally he then looks to his friends. But friends fail in this crisis. He dismisses them with the words, "miserable comforters are ye all." He seeks consolation from his wife, and the only light she is able to throw upon the problem is: "Change your religion. There must be something radically wrong with your belief in Providence and the profit of godliness. Surely a loving God would not permit you to suffer thus. Curse God and die!"

Finding his trusted supports gone, Job is thrown back upon his own intellectual processes. His mind wanders about blindly through the universe crying, Why, Why, Why? But there is no answering voice. No sound comes to his ear but the ceaseless grinding of the wheels of that remorseless machine known variously as cosmos, force, law. No compassion looks down upon him from the eyeless sockets of fate. He senses no warm thrill as, reaching up out of a sea of trouble, he grasps the dead hand of philosophy. He is desolate, alone, defeated before the mystery of

being. Yet not alone, for in his extremity God finds the afflicted man, and with loving hand conducts him into the temple of nature, that he may there read the meaning of it all, and come at last to know the harmony of life, which too close proximity to single blatant notes has made it impossible for him to discern.

Those hours alone with God out-of-doors were the greatest of Job's life. It was an experience never to be forgotten. He was shown the foundations of the tabernacle, the beams laid in light, the dome as of molten glass supported upon pillars of morning and pillars of evening, and the many encircling galleries, mountain upon mountain, tier above tier. His attention is called to the sunrise tapestries, the verdant carpeting and the starry chandeliers, particularly to the Pleiades and Orion cluster.

"You shall now hear my great organ." So saying God drew the vox-angelica stop, and Job heard the music of insect life; the flute and piccolo stops, and he listened to the music of bird life; the trumpet stop, and the instrument gave forth the rich, strong tones of animal life. Then came the dulcimer, the music of pattering raindrops. Finally the deep-throated double open diapason was heard as reverberating thunder shook the temple to its very foundation.

At this psychological moment the Almighty turned suddenly upon his perplexed servant with the question, "Where wast thou when I made all this? Tell me, if thou canst." Job has no adequate answer. His soul has been stirred to its utmost depth. In a hushed whisper of reverential awe and humility he speaks, "I

have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth Thee. For the first time I understand the noise of Thy Tabernacle. I see it all quite clearly now. I live in a universe of intelligence, power, order, concord and benevolence. Forgive me, Lord, that I ever misjudged or doubted heaven's blessings or thee."

"So be it, troubled heart. Now that thine own soul hath found the peace of God, pray. Pray for the theologians, thy friends, thy wife. Pray for the world, that all may understand the noise of my tabernacle."

He prayed that day, prayed as never before. The service over, Job went back to his complex life to meet at the tabernacle door faith, health, and prosperity more abundant than he had ever known before.

Have we so read Job? No? Then, dear friends, we have never read the book at all. This immortal epic of the inner life reaches its climax in the six beautiful nature chapters with which it closes. One hundred and sixty verses of God's unspoiled handiwork, in every one of which is seen Almighty power, divine providence, and undeviating good will. The lesson is this: A universe in which is clearly seen a loving will cannot be purposeless.

Thus far I have sought to surround you with the atmosphere of the text. Now let us enter his tabernacle, that we may find for ourselves all that Job found. Habitually men of old, when hard pressed by inexplicable circumstances, sought peace and comfort out of doors, alone with God. "I will lift up mine eyes

unto the hills whence cometh my help," is the key to the Psalmist's trustful though checkered life. I see Elijah in those hours of reaction following the greatest triumph of his life. Faith spent from that shining victory for God on Mount Carmel. Physical strength spent from running so after the King's chariot. There he sits beneath the juniper tree depressed beyond words. "What doest thou here, Elijah?" God asks. "Lord, everything has gone to smash: religion, theology, thine altars, thy prophets. I am the only one left, and they seek my life." Of course, there is not a word of truth in much of this, but no use to argue with a man when he is in such a state of physical and spiritual collapse. He must have rest, sleep, food. These God provides. But he needs something infinitely more. He must get hold of himself, get back his faith, get a firmer grip upon God. This he succeeds in doing under circumstances as fascinating to me now as when read to me in childhood by a Christian mother. Elijah regained his faith at an organ recital in nature's temple. He had a choice box-seat in a cleft of the rock. The divine organist used that day the earthquake stop, the fire stop, the wind stop. As the music of the *vox humana* stilled and caressed him, Elijah felt his weariness and despondency dropping from him as clothing from the tired body at bedtime hour. "Why!" said he, "there is order, harmony, love, after all!"

Where, if not out of doors, alone with God, did Jesus refresh His soul, strengthen His faith and make resolute His purpose? Long days and nights in the

wilderness, nights of prayer in the mountains, alone with God in the garden,—here were the everflowing springs from which He slaked His thirst and nerved Himself for the highest and best endeavor.

Again the summer is upon us, and so far as possible let us seek refreshment for body, soul and spirit amidst templed hills, cathedral pines and peaceful countryside. Man made the cities, God made the country. If we have lost God in the maze of daily life we shall find Him yonder.

These are days of unprecedented perplexity and world-engulfing sorrow. One is positively bewildered in the presence of such colossal awfulness. But there is something bigger than skyscraper, dreadnaught and gun. Go find it.

Have we been caught in the impact of the "superman" and the "under-man"? Have both elbowed God out of consideration? Then let us take a look at the Grand Canyon of Arizona. Perhaps we shall feel as did a famous artist who went thither quite confident he could capture the glories of that scene for his canvas. He came away without unpacking his brushes. When asked for an explanation he said, "I dared not insult God."

Do we fear that Christianity, idealism and all the rich heritage of past centuries are lost forever? Have the springs of sentiment and emotion gone dry? We may take our fears to Kentucky and follow the course of the lost river, so called because it vanishes into a cave no one knows whither.

Do the pounding waves of world-unrest affright us? If we go and stand by the sea-side we may be

reassured by the voice of Omnipotence, "thus far shalt thou go and no further."

Have we lost Christ and faith in a Kingdom over which He shall reign? Follow Peter's "I go a-fishing." Fishing is a means of grace—at least so I have found it. A hook, a brook, a shady nook—ah, what medicine for shattered nerves and what rehabilitation for a despoiled life!

Does the world seem a howling wilderness and well-nigh uninhabitable because of wild instincts that prowl about by day and by night? Then feed the squirrels.

A scene comes to mind. It was a beautiful June evening. I sat upon a bench in Riverside park. Nearby lay a working-man upon his back gazing up at the processioning clouds. Beside him sat his wife, pulling at the grass, and his little child, feeding a gray squirrel. Presently I heard him remark, "Who says there's a world-war?" A musical laugh was the wife's only response. I studied the group, and my heart went out to them. All the burdens of life had been lifted during those few precious moments in God's out-of-doors.

As things stand to-day, there is grave peril for our sanity and institutions unless we let go and let God speak. Slacken up on nerve tension and thought buckle; let God ease the harness. Relax and He will reveal.

Many there are to whom war has brought changes almost as great as those enumerated in Job. Possessions have taken wings, loved ones are gone, health is impaired, friends have not all proved true, religion is

no longer the consolation it once was. Nobody understands, apparently nobody cares. All of which proves we are being initiated into the greatest secret society of the world—the Fellowship of Suffering. And we shall never find peace and confidence until we have received the highest degree, kneeling beside our Lord in some garden with His words of self-dedication upon our lips, "nevertheless not my will but Thine be done."

I once heard Dr. F. B. Myer tell a Northfield audience how, in the greatest intellectual and spiritual crisis of his life, he fled to a wooded hillside overlooking the town where he was pastor, to escape the doubts and fears that hounded him. He was on the verge of insanity. He had written his resignation and was resolved to demit the ministry. Think of it—he, one of the greatest spiritual preachers of his age! After hours of pacing to and fro, he found his answer, and with it peace, kneeling in prayer beside a fallen tree.

It is necessity, not literary art, that offers the solution for Job's quandary in rocks and stars, storm and sunshine, whirlwind and whispering waters. In no other fashion could the Almighty be fittingly introduced into the drama. The measure of truth is the measure of form required for its expression. To Nicodemus's "How can these things be?" Jesus replies in terms of nature. The implication is that regeneration is too profound for verbal explanation.

Those spiritual truths most needing emphasis at this time are too magnificent for words. Salvation through

vicarious suffering, the joy of service, the passion for righteousness, the beauty of human brotherhood, the glory of Jesus Christ, the love of God—what tongue or pen or mind is sufficient for such themes? Where then shall we turn for light and understanding? Where Job turned.

Since nature is good and God is God we may abide in confidence, if we will. Although the leaves fade trees grow. Although there is noise in the branches as they succumb to the elements and rustling among the leaves lying dead upon the ground, the roots continue growing in silence. Death is ostentatious, not so life.

It was the close of a perfect spring day. We were leaving behind us Egypt, with its colossal monuments of a past civilization, and Palestine, with what little is left of the early beginnings of that eternal Kingdom which the Christ-man is erecting. Our ship was steaming across the Mediterranean directly toward the golden gate of an exquisite sunset. I stood upon the upper deck just under the officers' bridge, regarding a scene to me as impressive as was the prodigality of the Artist invisible, who spilled as many colors upon the sea as He spread upon His canvas, the sky. Drawn as by a magnet, passengers and crew were crowded together as far forward as they could get. About me stood first cabin passengers, men of affairs, ladies of fashion, youths of ambition, lovers, and several in deep mourning. On the deck below were the second cabin passengers, while a motley company from almost every quarter of the globe, swarming the steerage deck,

put standing-room at a premium. There was little conversation. Upon every deck each was alone with his own thoughts—and with God. It was to me one of those wonderful moments of life. The throb of the machinery, the swish of the waves at the bow, the sunset, the transfixed gazers—I can give you only the faintest conception of the impressiveness of the picture. Standing in that group, there came to mind words inspired by a similar scene, "There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard."

Again it is the close of a day we thought perfect. Humanity is sailing into a sunset more spiritually glorious by reason of the many clouds that with broken wings are flying over our heads into the night behind us. Who does not feel the spell of the hour? Who has not had his moments alone with his thoughts? But the gathering twilight is pregnant with a new, a better day. Even now Faith whispers to the soul, "The morning breaketh." So take your sorrows, doubts, anxieties, dear heart, into his tabernacle this summer and be at rest.

"Can any understand the noise of his tabernacle?" Yes, Elihu, they can, and they do. And, because they understand, men are more and more coming to believe that intelligence, power, order, harmony and love preside over this jarring era, and that some day the sob of the nations will become the new song of the redeemed.

XVII

ASSUMPTION—THE FIRST STEP IN ACHIEVEMENT

"Now are they but one body." I CORINTHIANS, 12:20.

As one enters the visitors' gallery of the Congressional Library at Washington the first thing the eyes rest upon is an inscription upon the opposite wall of the great octagonal reading room:

> "One God, one law, one element and one
> far-off divine event to which the
> whole creation moves."

There above the many men of many minds frequenting the reading room; there above the many books of many kinds reposing in cases and iron stacks is emblazoned the shining ideal to which the world is moving—unity.

Just now the whole creation is moving in the direction of this goal with ever increasing momentum. Perhaps the divine event is not so far off as we had supposed. Truly unity is in the air. Statesman and ecclesiastic, business and labor are seeking more earnestly than ever before to substitute coöperation for competition, brotherhood for bitterness.

And the world is looking to the church of the

Christ to lead the way. As the Bishop of Oxford, Rt. Rev. Charles Gore, put it in a moving address: "No league of nations will be sufficient unless it be based on the universality of the brotherhood of man in which denomination, schism, sectarianism and class distinction are broken down and Christendom reunited in one great Catholic Church."

On every hand and in every land there is a growing demand for one Holy Catholic Apostolic Church—the corporate name as given in the oldest creed of Christendom. This may not be the name ultimately agreed upon, but it certainly embodies the essence of the church universal as originally conceived by our Lord and by His first disciples. But how is the happy consummation to be brought about? "Aye, there's the rub." Many and earnest are the enquiries as to the best "modus vivendi" and a veritable epidemic of unity meetings has broken out. Spontaneously and in different parts of the country and of the world conferences and conventions are being held. Duly accredited delegates appointed by various ecclesiastical bodies have set out from Europe and from America to make overtures to Christians across the seas, only to find to their immense surprise, sympathetic convocations in session waiting to receive them—God's Spirit having outrun the missioner. Such a delegate from the Greek Orthodox Church less than twenty-four hours after landing in New York found himself seated on the platform in a great unity conference of the Presbytery of New York. Such is the quickened sense of oneness throughout Christendom.

How shall we proceed to give body to these hopes

and expectations? Why not follow the example of St. Paul? The context presents a platform for Christian unity which cannot be improved upon for directness, tact and practicability. Paul handled divisions in the church of his day with decision and despatch. Before our great purpose becomes clouded with non-essentials, before the mind has had opportunity to erect barriers in the way of spiritual progress let the heart speak, let faith declare itself. How?

First, by making a *bold assumption* that we are *already one.* The question is often asked: "Is Organic Union a possibility?" Unquestionably. It is even now an accomplished fact, did we but realize it. The sooner we recognize the fact and approach each other in the spirit of conference rather than in the spirit of distrust the better for the cause. Such is the New Testament method of approach.

Paul met the schisms undermining the first century church with the bold affirmation, "Now *are* ye one body." Upon the hypothesis that believers were already members of one body he set about making them function harmoniously. He treated a negative situation with a positive corrective. He reminds his patients that they are suffering from an eruption upon the surface and not from any organic disturbance. And when we review the facts this diagnosis is fully confirmed.

The Corinthian Church, with characteristic Greek admiration for wisdom and eloquence, had mistaken adroit rhetoric and flaming oratory for the real thing —spiritual experience. Therefore "I am for Paul; I

am for Apollos; I am for Cephas." Thus many sincere Christians became entangled in the meshes of theological controversy, and Christian casuistry. How is the Apostle to extricate his spiritual children from the snares of negation? By calling them back to reality, namely their indissoluble oneness in Christ.

Is not this the crux of the whole matter? Are we or are we not in Christ? If we are, then we are one body, by whatsoever names our several members may be known. To declare, then, for organic union is not to propose something new and radical; it is to assert something old and fundamental. It is our ancient faith endeavoring to restore what has become atrophied, what has been lost. At heart we are in harmony, in spirit we are one, in mind we are—how shall I put it—addled. We have sacrificed collective consciousness for group consciousness. If this be so the unhappy problem of disunion should be treated biologically and not mechanically. We may take to ourselves the illuminating words spoken by Clemenceau at the opening of the Peace Conference, "The League of Nations is here. It is ourselves. It is for us to make it live, and to make it live we must have it really in our hearts." The withinness of the unity movement is the dominant note which must be sounded over and over until all pipes in the vast organ of Christendom are voiced and tuned.

Organic union is not a matter that must await the tardy decision of ecclesiastical procedure. It is a wonderfully articulated, diversely functioning body of reality, created not from without by denominational

mandate but from within by the Holy Spirit. Organic union is biological, not theological. Nothing short of this interpretation does justice to 1st Corinthians, 12. Here as elsewhere the physical body is represented as the counterpart of the Christian body. The union for which the Master prayed is not an alliance or a federation. It is a living thing—multiform yet uniform.

We are coming more and more to see that this is the case. Not alone in the trenches of Europe have men of different belief felt their essential oneness. Wherever there has been comradeship in service or in sacrifice the same thrill of reality is experienced. That which divides us cannot be so very vital, else the line of cleavage would be more clearly marked. Is it not a fact that a twilight zone of considerable proportion forms the boundary line between great denominations? Is it not true that the larger number of believers inhabit this zone? The most astute theologians find it increasingly difficult to determine exactly where one denomination ends and another begins. Only the other day I heard Dr. H. K. Carroll, the Government statistician, say, "I am often hard put to determine from their belief and practice just how to classify churches." And a glance at his statistical report visualizes this difficulty. For example, there are fifteen different kinds of Baptists, eighteen varieties of Lutherans, sixteen branches of Methodism and eleven subdivisions of Presbyterianism. Must union (or better reunion) be delayed until these one hundred and sixty odd Protestant denominations agree upon tenets which shall bind them together in a united church of

Jesus Christ? I hope not. Why suffer longer the paralysis of a discordant idea when the miracle working Spirit stands ready to set us free from our infirmity?

"*Now* are we one body." Whenever a venture has been made upon this assumption results have more than justified it. Witness the many interdenominational movements for ethical reform, for social service and for spiritual quickening. Witness the late lamented Interchurch World Movement, which swept so many off their feet. Whatever the defects of this movement it discovered to one and to all undreamed of eagerness to express in concrete form the spirit of oneness so universally strong within us.

From the neck down the "Body of Christ" is manifestly united. There is a tacit agreement among the members; there is a working agreement. We are one in spirit, one in heart, one in service; why not one in mind? Possibly we are; and will so discover when the Pentecostal Spirit enables us to understand each other's tongue. The mental conflict which rages in every one's being would cease if we should come together with the one object of declaring the wonderful works of God.

In England they have already done this in large measure; consequently the unity movement is further advanced over there. Such movements as the Swanic Fellowship (taking its names from the town where the meetings are held) have greatly advanced the movement. At first it was a company of Non-Conformist ministers drawn together by a yearning

for spiritual fellowship and meeting in secret. Then it became two companies, the one Non-Conformist and the other Anglican, meeting simultaneously in towns three miles apart, because of the ecclesiastical ban put upon the movement by the latter body. But between the sessions members of the respective conferences gravitated together in friendly intercourse, and the Spirit did its work. So the secret came out, as evidence of one living Christian organism began to appear. Then followed the fruits of the Spirit. And now the churches of England are eagerly awaiting the time when the essential unity of Christian denominations is officially recognized and a corporate form and title of this Church Universal is evolved. Doubtless the union of Christendom will be brought about by the same biological processes.

Again, still following the example of St. Paul, let there be a declaration for a platform of tolerance. And by tolerance I do not mean indifference, but a generous recognition that diversity is inevitable in any organism. Remember, we are not trimming a Christmas tree; we are planting a Christian tree. "Thou knowest not what it shall be." Is not this the thought? "Now are we many members, but one body."

We must somehow contrive to pool our beliefs, so to speak. Denominational differences have not been wholly deplorable. It might be a great loss to Christendom, certainly it would be a great handicap upon the unity movement were we to quench the light of great truths which, 'tis thought, some folks have seen more clearly than others. "The eye cannot say to the

hand, we have no need of you." The curse of denominationalism has grown up out of the necessity for striking back in defense of certain things "revealed unto some and not unto all." Eliminate the attack and the bristling defenses will fall into decay as so many unsightly fortifications which enlightened civilization has rendered useless. Organic union should not impair liberty of conscience any more than it does the sovereignty of states.

We are so constituted that we are incapable of seeing things alike. Some feel about union as Charles Lamb felt about music; "Sentimentally I am for harmony, but organically I am incapable of carrying a tune." All due allowance should be made for the self-evident fact that so long as we are in the body there will be diversity of gifts and differences of operation. To many, who sentimentally are for harmony, compromise would be intolerable and conformity would be irksome.

More than one effort to unite Christendom has failed dismally for no other reason than this; it was too arbitrary, too mechanical. For instance during the middle ages an effort was made to unite Christendom by means of uniformity of belief; everywhere the same belief embodied in the same tongue. Mechanically the program had everything in its favor. There was the authority of the Papal Church supported by Imperial Rome. The Holy Roman Empire, it was called. But, as Professor Richards aptly remarks, "It was too holy to be Roman and too Roman to be holy." This time it is organism not mechanism which we should have in mind.

The foreign missionary field presents some admirable examples of Christian unity which might be studied with profit. Dr. Arthur J. Brown was thrilled and enlightened by organic union as he observed it in the far East. One address to which he listened embodied the spirit which must now prevail if the various Christian bodies in the homeland are ever to get together. A Chinese Christian began an address by pointing to one after another of the American Christians present as, impressively, he uttered these earnest words: "You are a Presbyterian and you cannot help it; you were born that way. You are a Methodist and you cannot help it; you were born that way. You are an Episcopalian and you cannot help it; you were born that way. We are Christians and we don't propose to let you keep us apart." The assembled Chinese Christians represented every denomination to which allusion was made and many others. They were all enjoying denominational advantages made possible by denominational generosity in England and in America. They were loyal to their respective branches of Christianity. And yet, they were one—spiritually one—organically one.

Is such unity feasible in America and throughout the world? I am sure of it. And I might justify this faith by proofs aplenty were there time and space. It has been my happy privilege to witness many evidences of the essential unity now present in the various branches of Christianity. A very recent experience is characteristic.

The scene: A committee room where numerous in-

terdenominational conferences have been convened. The occasion: An earnest desire to attempt something really catholic and statesmanlike in a home mission field where there has been overlapping. The participants: Officially designated representatives from six outstanding denominations. First there was friendly exchange of ideas; then the cordial recognition of our essential unity; then frank acknowledgement of the unwisdom of the existing "Go-as-you-please-system," and its utter inadequacy. After which the conference took up the particular duties entrusted to it, to-wit: first, the mapping out of an adequate and comprehensive program for concerted action; and second the establishment of a theological seminary for natives —the latter a rather ambitious venture. The first end was attained by agreeing upon a complete survey of the whole field and its needs in the light of a new day and a new assignment of territory upon the basis of comity. The second duty, which it was thought might involve greater difficulties, was discharged with extraordinary harmony and dispatch. Proceeding upon the assumption that we are all members of one body we incorporated this belief in the name agreed upon. To call the new institution "The Union Seminary" would be to cloud a bright prospect with memories of a former disunion. So the name finally chosen was "The Evangelical Theological Seminary," thereby fixing the gaze of preacher and parishioner upon the new day and the enlarging opportunity rather than upon the old order and its misunderstandings. Throughout the conference all were conscious of the presence of the Holy Spirit and the consensus of opinion was that

we were then enjoying, in a small way, what all Christians will some day enjoy on a grand scale. Several "Peters" were present who made bold to declare, "Men and brethren, *this* is *that* which is spoken by the prophet."

The promotion of unity is a Christian duty from which none may be absolved. Never have denominations been so nearly of one mind as now. Therefore, if it is at all possible to unite on a basis of Spirit and service by all means let us do so and at once, leaving the organism to develop normally and in as varied detail as the living Spirit may determine.

XVIII

ONE GOD—ONE FAITH

"One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in you all." EPHESIANS 4:5.

A clergyman once took me to task for permitting a newly organized Jewish congregation to hold regular services in the church of which I am pastor. That was some eight years ago, when this particular type of hospitality was quite uncommon. Said he, "I have long wanted to ask how you were able to reconcile such a desecration with your Christian belief? How could you permit those who deny the deity of Jesus to worship in a sanctuary dedicated to Him?"

To which I replied: "There was no desecration; there was nothing to reconcile. Our hospitality was the ripe fruit of our Christian belief. I thought then and I still think that by opening our church to devout compatriots of Jesus, making no charge whatever, we were doing exactly what Christians should do. We were expressing the mind and the spirit of Jesus; we were doing what Jesus Himself would have done."

"But," he argued, "the Jews deny the deity of Jesus. How do you get around that fact?"

"I don't try to get around it. I view this fact in the light of other facts and appraise Jews accordingly."

Then I asked, "Is not Jesus God?"

"Most certainly."

"Well, do not the Jews worship God?"

"To be sure."

"And is not Jesus the Holy Spirit? And do not the Jews believe in the Holy Spirit?"

"Quite so."

"Well, it strikes me, if the Jews believe in and worship two-thirds of our Trinity we can afford to trust them for the other third inasmuch as God has been trusting them for forty centuries."

In matters of denominational casuistry I endeavor to imagine how I would feel under similar circumstances if I were God. And this is the way this Jewish matter lies in my mind. Here I am a clergyman, my dress and mode of life are in keeping with my profession—the greater part of the year. But, when summer comes and I betake me to my country home, ministerial attributes are laid aside and I become a laboring man, working with pick and shovel, with hammer and saw, with Stillson wrench and monkey wrench. When a particularly dirty job is undertaken I don overalls. Not infrequently I am so covered with grease and grime as to be unrecognizable as a city pastor.

Numbered among my best friends are some old-time aristocrats, great sticklers for "the proprieties." If some of these were to see me in overalls they might fail to recognize me. Or, although recognizing, they might be disinclined to speak to me in that garb. What would be my attitude toward such friends? The

slight might be attributed to near-sightedness or to mere uppishness. In either case, it would never occur to me to lay it up against them forever.

Now, Jesus was God in overalls. I say this with all due reverence and with profound gratitude. In Jesus, God laid aside the attributes of deity and donned the garb of humanity. This was not done for effect but for effectiveness. It was strictly a matter of necessity. A particularly difficult and disagreeable work was to be undertaken. To do this work God put on working clothes—a concept which the Jews, the world's religious aristocrats, have thus far been unable to grasp. For that matter few Gentiles are able fully to appreciate such superlative self-emptying. And yet only as we come to appreciate this, can we measure the atonement in all its down-reach and up-lift. As the cross indicates the lengths to which divine love went to lift the saint to the right hand of God, so the incarnation indicates the depth to which that love went to get its hands upon the sinner.

According to my understanding of the New Testament the Jesus-God did not come to this earth to set up a new, competitive religion but to work out a completer religion. "Fulfill" is the word with which He announces His mission. "I came not to destroy the law and the prophets, but to fulfill." In Jesus the Hebrew religion flowered; in Him it exuded the fragrance of the Divine mind and heart and spirit.

In Jesus we have a fuller revelation of God, not a different revelation. He is a more personal and therefore a simpler manifestation. He was present back

yonder within the bosom of a Hebrew's faith; He is present now within each heart that feels the warm breathing of the Holy Spirit. And once upon a time He was present in life's dusty workshop, clad in humanity, touched with the feeling of man's infirmity and tempted in all points like as we are. In each and every form He is the one God; "the same in substance, equal in power and glory." Do we comprehend it? No, nor ever shall. Do we believe it? Yes, with every God-given instinct of our being.

I speak of these circumstances to show the necessity for a new valuation of the religion of Jesus. To set forth this matter of religion in its original Christian light is the object of this discussion. So I bring you into the fresh clear atmosphere of the apostolic age: "One God, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all who is over all and in you all." Words could not be more emphatic and explicit. One God, one faith, one baptism, one Father. Accepting them at face value and as final it would seem that there is but one religion after all.

Who made this sweeping declaration? Paul, the Tarsan, the Jew, of the very race I was expected to debar from my church, the man who once made the proud boast that he was a Hebrew of the Hebrews. But he was something more. He was a Christian of the Christians. Educated at the feet of that Hebrew scholar and jurist, Gamaliel, he understood the Hebrew viewpoint. Enlightened at the feet of Jesus he understood the Christian viewpoint. Thus in Paul and

his writings are conjoined and confluent the two greatest visions of God, the two greatest streams of divine revelation. As few other men he saw clearly how the one revelation was the complement of the other; how it requires both hemispheres to make a full-orbed religion.

In this particular passage Paul seeks to bridge an apparent chasm between the time-honored Jewish religion and the newly established Christian religion, and a sorry time he had doing it. The Jews threw him out and slammed the door of the synagogue in his face, and the Christians kept him out and bolted the door of the church against him. For it will be remembered that three years after his conversion he applied for membership in the Jerusalem Church and was rejected. Think of it! The great apostle, the inspirer of the great missionary movement that has since engirdled the earth, the great theologian and Christian statesman, unwelcome in his own household of faith! Who could have better reason to speak out, who could speak with deeper feeling, with more intense yearning: "One God, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all and through all and in you all." Now examine this miniature edition of theology a little more closely.

What is the outstanding tenet of true religion? The universal fatherhood of God. From cover to cover of the Book of God, and upon every page it is written in letters of gold, "God is the Father of all." To proclaim this revelation and to make it realizable is religion pure and unadulterated, as it is the only

religion worth while. If we haven't this kind of religion we are devoid of the religion of Jesus.

This tenet is fundamental to spiritual conquest of every kind, individual and social. Unless all men are children of God it is quite useless to talk to people about God. You cannot make a soul understand that which is generically out of reach of that soul. As Paul reasons elsewhere, "For what man knoweth the things of a man save by the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man but the Spirit of God that is in him." If the spirit of God is not in the child how are you going to talk with him about his Father? He has got to be a child of God or all your talk is sheer nonsense—to him.

Hear it again: "There is one God and Father of all who is above all and through all and in you all." One God—the Father. One faith—mutual trust, as between father and child, between child and father, between child and child. One baptism—not this or that form of administration but a divine infilling; a baptism of the Father's Spirit. This—and nothing short of this is the religion of Jesus.

Again, there is but one motive in this one religion, namely the establishment of harmonious family relations throughout the earth. This is the goal toward which the whole creation moves. This in substance is Christianity's program. When you have said this you have comprehended everything else—personal evangelism—ethical culture—social service—economic justice, civic righteousness—industrial democracy and political reform. Read verses one to three of the

chapter before us from "I beseech you, brethren" to "endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace."

Analyze the Kingdom idea so insistently enunciated by Jesus in His day and so earnestly stressed by His followers in their day. What is it?

Manifestly, the Kingdom idea is not political, it is domestic. Its true embodiment is not an organization but an organism. It is not centered in Washington, London, the Hague, nor yet in Jerusalem. It is centered in your heart and in mine. The Kingdom of God is within you. You need not wait until you can get Kingdom laws written upon our statute books or Kingdom wisdom incorporated in the curriculum of our reorganized universities. We are not dependent upon these hard ways of doing things. There is an easier, more expeditious and more fruitful method of getting results. Let each child open his heart and mind to the Father's Spirit, and seek a real spiritual baptism, and the Father's faith will grow out of that baptism and fruition out of that faith. It is far more important that we share God's faith in man than that we acquire man's faith in God. Religionists from time immemorial have stressed the latter kind of faith out of all proportion to its importance. When we are filled with the Father's Spirit and share the Father's faith we shall find ourselves in the midst of a perfect family circle. Then the Kingdom will have come.

We come now to a concluding point. There is one method of carrying out this purpose. It is that time-honored method of at-one-ment, a contrivance to

make it easier for the members of the family to see eye to eye. It removes middle walls of partition, minimizes apparent differences, magnifies essential onenesses, and by condescensions translates into fraternal approaches all the directorial and disciplinary contacts of life. In fine, the method is that of lubrication and love.

This explains the central place of Christ in religion —the place of at-one-ment. This shows why the Jew loses so much out of his religion when he loses Christ. He may acknowledge two-thirds of God, but when he rejects the remaining third he loses the most precious and important part of the Godhead. We are not to blame him for it. We are not to keep him out of his Father's house. Rather we are to try to bring him in, even if on his own terms. Who knows but he may get the right view of Jesus by our rightly representing the spirit incarnated in Jesus. In order to make it possible for the members of the family to see eye to eye the Father Himself *came down* and became a son. Is not that a natural and logical thing for a father to do? Do not earthly fathers deal with their children after this fashion? The Father emptied Himself of His paternal prerogatives and took upon Him filial and fraternal attributes. He took His place within the family circle, He lived the life of the child, giving the entire household an example of how children ought to feel and act toward one another; and how they ought to feel and act toward the Father. Thus and only thus could members of the human family be enabled to see eye to eye.

In view of all this I am led to believe that those

who would break up the family of God are not actuated by the Spirit of Jesus. It is quite all right for the children to go their various ways and establish domiciles after their own tastes. But it is all wrong to lay claim to the entire patrimony. The first test I apply to any religion is this: What is its motive? What is its method? Is it designed to bring the family together? Then it is a true religion. Is it disruptive in spirit and aim? Then it needs a baptism of the Holy Spirit.

At this point a few homely illustrations may prove helpful. I have said the place of Jesus in the one religion is that of mediator; He is the means whereby God and man, man and man, see eye to eye. Two volumes by the same author stand side by side in my library. One is a volume of Roosevelt's state papers; the other is "Roosevelt's Letters to His Children." Which Roosevelt would you rather know? Which gives you the most satisfying view of the Great American? For my own part, I get a far more appreciative sense of Theodore Roosevelt from the letters punctuated with little humanisms and illustrated with grotesque drawings of pussycats and dogs, et al., than I do from the state papers. By emptying himself of the glory wherewith men honored him and the almost boundless versatility and power wherewith God had endowed him, Theodore Roosevelt got nearer to the American people and they got nearer to him than would ever have been possible otherwise.

Two other companion volumes are here before me. The one is the Old Testament, the other is the New

Testament. The Old Testament contains God's state papers. The New Testament reveals God among His children, in the playroom if you please. Little folks and big folks, poor folks and rich folks, outcast and outclassed—they are climbing all over Him. The state papers are wonderful, but God's letters to His children—my, how they warm the heart, flood the soul and lend a touch of inexpressible reality to religion and a sense of kinship to all human kind.

Here is a manufacturer. Dissension has broken out in his factory. What will he do? Call down the labor union? Call out the police? They don't all do that way. The new way is God's method. It is becoming more and more popular every day. The new employer leaves the office to clerks as he formerly left the men to bosses, and going out among his men he puts on overalls. He takes up tools he has not used for years. He tells the men of his early struggle, of how he got his first real start, of how at last he won out. He becomes confidential. "Tom, how is that little crippled girl of yours? Come around and see me after the whistle blows and we will see what can be done for her." He addresses the men at the noon hour, "Boys, if you have any grievances don't take them to outsiders, bring them to me. My private office door is open every noon and evening. Drop in and let's talk it out. Come yourself—don't send another."

The papers have little space for such human, everyday stories. But there are many employers doing just such things. Aye, and there are corporations and maligned capitalists who are endeavoring to solve the acute industrial problems of the day by the teachings

of Jesus. They are trying to work out their salvation by the method of the one religion—one is our Father and all we are brethren. This is the brightest hope of our day. Our trust is not in Washington; it is right here in the offices of these big corporations where men are getting a new vision, seeing a new light.

Here is a father with a boy at college. He discerns from letters received that all is not right. Cancelling important business engagements he boards the train, and unexpectedly blows in on his son, who at first is startled, but at last is glad with a new found gladness as father and son get on the inside of each other's vest. Together they watch the games, make the rounds of the fellows' rooms as Charlie proudly shows off his "Dad." From that time on everything is different. The son is forever declaring, "Dad is a corking fellow." And the other fellow classmates remark, "I wish I had a Dad like yours."

Religious differences are due very largely to varying degrees in our knowledge of the Fatherhood of God. In some religions God is aloof—He is "the Governor." Although couched in other terms the idea is just that. In other religions God is so much special property. Extreme denominationalism often reminds me of amusing controversies of childhood: "He is my Papa." "He is not your Papa—he is mine." The author of our text was once upon a time this kind of a religionist. But he nobly outgrew it. "When I became a man I put away childish things," said he. The question is, are we as big as Paul, as big as our gospel. Jesus does not belong to the church alone.

He belongs to sinner as well as to saint, to Jew as much as to Gentile. "Christ for the world we sing." "Not my God but ours, humanity's one bond." Jesus Himself said, "Other sheep I have who are not of this fold." The final test of religion must ever be: Have its exponents received the spirit of adoption whereby they are able to cry, "Abba—Papa, Father." If they have they will see eye to eye with members of the family.

The other day I opened an old trunk which had long been in storage. Therein I found the large cotton tent in which brother and I played as children. It awakened memories that filled me with thrills. I saw again the big grass plot back of our house, the paradise for all the children of our neighborhood. And a recollection came sailing back to me upon a river of tears. It was of a wondrous night when my father came down from his study, out of his comfortable bed-chamber to sleep in that tent with us. Long after supper, when darkness had come on and we were getting lonesome and a wee bit disillusioned, the flaps were parted by my sainted father who said, "Boys, how are you getting along?" We said, "Fine," with mental reservations. "Well, how would you like me to sleep out here with you?" I wish you could have seen our tent mates, the neighbor boys. They did not believe such a father existed; a father who could bring himself to such condescension. Those boys never got done talking about my father. Through my father they gained a wholly new vision of fatherhood.

According to my Bible, in Jesus God *tabernacled*

with man. The Father camped out with the children. By so doing He did not cease to be Father—He became more of a Father than ever, and by the same token the children should be more to each other. It would be passing strange indeed if the condescension of the heavenly Father has only served to magnify the differences and widen the gulf between members of the household of faith. O Father, Father of all, may we apprehend afresh to-day that all men are cherished in Thy bosom. Together may we worship the one God as Father; may we be actuated by the one faith, mutual trust; may we receive the one baptism of the Father's Spirit. Amen and Amen.

XIX

WHAT IS DEMOCRACY?

"God has made of one blood all nations of men." Acts 17:26.

These words constitute one of the earliest declarations of the principle of democracy. The sentiment was uttered in Athens, that ancient seat of learning, by Paul, the ablest exponent of Christianity. The essential unity of mankind was accepted then as a fundamental fact, both by scholars and by saints. It is so accepted to-day.

Science and religion therefore see eye to eye on the main proposition, and they may cordially coöperate in their mutually avowed purpose to bring about the full realization of pure democracy, provided they do not permit their attention to be diverted from the fundamental fact.

And just here lies the chief danger of the hour. We have become embittered and embroiled over confused and confusing issues. We are assigning to fractions the full value of the integer. We are getting lost in blind alleys.

Democracy! How loosely the term is used in this period of social unrest. It is a word to conjure with. It has come to be almost anything from autocracy to anarchy. Indeed it is daily becoming harder for the average man to determine whether democracy is free-

dom or frenzy. Wherefore, it is of extreme importance that we enquire, and with especial earnestness, What is Democracy? Going back to original sources we find that the answer is quite simple. Democracy is not many things but one thing. And, that one thing is Oneness.

Democracy may be defined in a single word. It is *solidarity*. Not the solidarity of identity or sameness, as so many particles of sand in a sandpile. In that case democracy would be an aggregation. Not mechanical solidarity as so many particles of earth in a wall of hard-baked brick. That would be democracy of the mass. But the solidarity of a living organism where there is variety, self-expression and yet the most vital unity. A plant is a good illustration. Every leaf, every branch, every flower is different—yet the plant is one. So much so that no leaf, no twig, no branch may sever its relations with the organism and no flower may be plucked from the stem without death ensuing. An even better example is the human body, where in addition to the death penalty for disunion there is a life penalty. "Whether one member suffer, all members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all members rejoice with it."

Is not this the principle embodied in all the sacred instruments of American democracy? The Declaration of Independence was the enunciation of the principle of solidarity. Had that principle been cordially accepted by the Mother Country in all probability America would not have severed her relations therewith. Self-expression, not separation, was the

desire of the forefathers. This fundamental principle is emblazoned upon our escutcheon: "E Pluribus Unum." It is written large in America's jurisprudence, "Equality before the law." It flames brightly from the torch in Liberty. It is heard more clearly than ever before in the frequent and fervent demand for Social Justice.

Solidarity has been the dominant note in Americanism from the nation's birth down to the recent unprecedentedly united effort in behalf of Democracy. Somewhere in every capital, in every schoolhouse, in every church might well be displayed the words of Abraham Lincoln, called forth by Greeley's "prayer" to him "in behalf of twenty million" who desired an immediate edict of emancipation:

"If there be those who would not save the Union unless they could at the same time save slavery, I do not agree with them. If there be those who would not save the Union unless they could at the same time destroy slavery I do not agree with them. My paramount object is to save the Union. What I do about slavery I do because I believe it helps to save the Union." Lincoln clearly understood the meaning of Democracy. Do we?

There is special need just now that we remind ourselves of this cardinal principle. In blindness of rage at glaring social injustice and in eagerness of heart to right the wrong we may mistake tinsel for gold and plunge humanity into a more dire plight. At the moment it looks very much as though we are about to fly from one evil into the arms of another. It is a

singular phenomenon which we behold. At a time when one set of class distinctions has completely broken down new forces are at work creating a new set of class distinctions, equally, if not more hurtful to true Democracy. Surely a new autocracy is not the solution to our social problems. Instead of healing the disease in the body politic are we not introducing new elements of discomfort into the system?

The disease is not on the surface, it is organic. It is not economic eruption, it is spiritual disunion. Any political doctor who contents himself with the application of patent nostrums that promise to allay the surface irritation is a quack. If merely money and material comforts are curative then the rich should be saints. Unfortunately, observation does not encourage one to believe that such is the case. What America needs most of all is the remedy prescribed by Mr. Lincoln in that dark hour when Democracy seemed about to expire: "Let us be dedicated anew to the proposition that all men are created free and equal. A house divided against itself cannot stand."

Whatever tends to disrupt is an enemy of democracy and must be eliminated. Contrariwise, whatever tends to create good feeling among the members of the organism; whatever promises to bring hitherto antagonistic interests into harmony should be encouraged. By following out this program we may make some mistakes—but they will be of judgment, not of heart. Anyway, is it not better to blunder on in the right direction than to continue living at this "poor dying rate?" Has it not been characteristic of Democracy

that it somehow "muddles through?" At best we are groping in the dark. So much the more should we be alertly aggressive lest in our blindness a bauble be palmed off on us in exchange for a priceless heritage. We are well aware that within the darkness beside us is friend and foe, and passwords are spoken by the one as well as by the other. So long as we know the real article when we see it there is a fighting chance to recover our ideals when they are made way with.

Is the League of Nations or the International Conference a real forward step? I am sure I do not know. Whether it is or no must be left to statesmen and to time to determine. Certainly the spirit of man is moving out in the right direction and all such efforts are deserving of sympathetic openmindedness upon the part of those who believe in the solidarity of the race. But, whatever uncertainties or misgivings of the statesman's gigantic task, the task of the Christian is quite clear.

The Bible declares man equal. The Constitution of the United States proclaims them equal. Neither assertion makes it so; and common sense tells us it is not so. To make it so in deed and in truth is the sacred obligation which Almighty God has placed upon both church and state. Not alone from the high motive of self-respect, but from the lower motive of self-preservation must be discharged this duty For unless we level up society others will level down society. As between the two, the former process is democratic, the latter is not. Our first task is then to make good the claims which the forefathers have put into words long cherished by every American.

This is the church's day of opportunity. Will she measure up to the high hopes of her founders? Christianity was born for such an hour as this. It was designed to be a vast unifying influence among the nations. The movement started well. The solidarity of society was fearlessly proclaimed at Jerusalem, the seat of bigotry; at Athens, the seat of learning; and at Rome, the seat of the mighty. The essential oneness of all races was set forth in convincing argument and in impassioned oratory. "There is no difference between Jew and Greek, Barbarian and Scythian, bondman and freeman." Racial distinctions, ritualistic distinctions, social distinctions, all were erased and at Pentecost a high-water mark of pure democracy was established. Then a dark tragedy befell the church and she came under the contaminating influence of the very systems she had been sent to supersede. First she became Judaized, then Romanized, then Partisanized, and finally demoralized. Christianity was to transform the nations but the nations transformed Christianity, bitter nationalism reproducing itself in denominationalism.

The hour has struck for the prompt recovery of Christianity's lost unity, without which she cannot serve our day and generation. Most of the divisive influences now seeking to break up democracy realize full well the importance of Christianity to political solidarity. Therefore, the bitter hatred of the church. Do Christians realize as fully how much depends upon the church? A divided church is incapable of ministering to a divided world. From which it will be

seen that something more than sentimental reasons prove conclusive the necessity for the union of Christendom. Manifestly a religion that estranges men who believe essentially alike can only work disintegration in spiritual solidarity which is the very soul of democracy. Partisan piety means partisan politics. A united church means a united world.

The church must "show" the world before she can save the world. The prayer of our Lord proves this conclusively: "Father, I pray that they may be one—that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me." The world will gladly welcome a demonstration. While the blood is up and while iron is in the blood let us undertake our great world task as a united body; all actuated by one living Spirit, safeguarded by one instinctive attitude of mind, and bound together by one common idea, one common principle and one common purpose. For such religious leadership the world is eagerly waiting.

Nature furnishes a parable which may help us to comprehend the turmoil of these days and the exact task of church and state.

There is a particularly dangerous body of water to the north of us, between the Coast of Maine and Nova Scotia (New Brunswick), the Bay of Fundy. Twice in every twenty-four hours a mighty tidal wave rolls in from the Atlantic sweeping to destruction everything in its path. Even under normal conditions this inflow from the ocean reaches a height of from twenty-five to thirty feet, and in the Spring it frequently at-

tains a height of from sixty to seventy feet. The sight of this huge oncoming wave is terrifying and never to be forgotten. Its foaming crest may be seen far out to sea. The mountain of water becomes more ominous as it advances and gathers momentum. The air is filled with mist and fog. Wild birds fly about screaming in the wake of the death dealing waters, looking for prey. Woe to the fisherman who has lingered too long over his net. Woe to the skipper who, unacquainted with the wild behavior of these tides, has delayed to find safety.

Who is to account for this apparent freak of nature? The explanation is simple. The peculiar conformation of the seacoast at this point is the cause. The Bay of Fundy has a funnel-shaped and rapidly narrowing entrance making it difficult for the daily tides of the ocean, usually only four to six feet, to enter. So the water backs up and piles higher and higher as the channel becomes narrower and shallower. And old ocean's task is made even more difficult by the divisions and sub-divisions of the Bay.

Now Democracy's terrifying and destructive aspects are due to much the same cause. As the moon at regular intervals reaches down and lifts the waters of the sea at high tide, so at regular intervals God reaches down and lifts the hearts of men to high tide of Democratic fervor. Wherever the inlet has been narrowed or made shallow; wherever the channel for the incoming flood has been divided and subdivided, there democracy assumes alarming, even terrifying proportions. There also mist and fog gathers and the wild

birds of prey fly screaming about, gloating over the death and destruction strewn in the wake of abnormal conditions.

Liberate the mind from all slavery to past prejudices and let it roam about the world and what do we find? This; that wherever inlets have been narrowed or divided by tyranny or bigotry, selfishness or greed, there has the rising tide of democracy assumed terrifying proportions. For this situation there is but one remedy. The tide cannot be changed; but the inlet can.

Unity has become a world note. Above the babel of counsels and the jargon of demands and incriminations this dominant note is heard, and it must be sustained loud and clear and long. Let us not permit our faith in this fundamental principle of democracy to be shaken. Solidarity is salvation and salvation is Christ in us, the hope of Kingdom Come.

XX

RECONCILING CHRIST'S KINGDOM IDEA WITH DEMOCRATIC IDEALS

"My Kingdom is not of this world." JOHN 18:3-6.

Terms of royalty are in growing disfavor. The world seems done with kings and emperors and crowns and all costly regalia. It is proposed that we revise Christian nomenclature. Proponents contend that the Kingdom idea is archaic, it is passé, it is something that does not belong to the new era. A more modern terminology is suggested: "A Republic of God, a Commonwealth of God, a Democracy of God." These suggestions open up an interesting question which I desire to discuss. How are we to harmonize Christ's Kingdom Idea with democratic ideals?

We shall not harmonize them at all unless we first clearly understand what is meant by the "Kingdom of God." Our difficulties arise largely out of the fact that we conceive of the Kingdom as a *political* order. This mistake is very ancient. It was the mistake of the early Jews. As it was generally understood that the Messiah's mission was the restoration of the political glory of Israel, the hastily organized pageant of Palm Sunday was only the embodiment of current opinion. The temple children had long been rehearsed

for the marching chant "Hosanna to the Son of David," and the populace for the antiphonal chorus, "Blessed be the Kingdom of our Father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord." Christ forgave the stupidity of the Jews, so we will not lay it up against them. They were the victims of circumstances from which believers should have shaken themselves loose by this time. Unfortunately they have not.

Have we forgotten how consistently Jesus held Himself aloof from all political complications? Jesus refused to lead a revolution. He lent his name to no movement of nonco-operation designed to embarrass the powers that be. He declined to become involved in much mooted tax questions. "Show me your penny and I'll show you your duty," said He. And if there be left in any mind the shadow of a doubt as to the political aloofness of Jesus it should be banished forever by the final colloquy with Pilate, "Art thou then a King?" "Thou sayest it. To this end was I born and for this cause came I into the world. But—my Kingdom is not of this world else would my followers fight."

No, the Kingdom teaching of Jesus moves along a very much higher plane than that of a political order. The Kingdom of God is not political, it is organic. It is not civil, it is vital. It is passing strange, when you come to think of it, that we ever got into this political blind alley. Politics is the least of all of the kingdoms whereunto one may liken Christ's Kingdom ideal. Political kingdoms are here to-day and to-morrow they are gone. Change and decay are nowhere

more in evidence. Standardization has not yet been attained. No sooner is a new political order set up than its throne is rocked and wrecked by new earthquakes. God's unshaken kingdom is not to be confused with shaken kingdoms.

Is there no other kingdom more abiding, whereunto we may liken the Kingdom of God? Surely. There are several. There is the mineral kingdom, the vegetable kingdom, the animal kingdom. Any one of these would prove a more filling analogy. Have you not noticed that Jesus is particularly partial to analogies drawn from nature? He resorts to political terms only when He must to get His idea "across" to some politician who knows no other language. Political terms are used as "death" was used, as a last resort. The King's kingdom analogies are vital, vibrant, organic. They are not generalizations; they are specifications. The beginning of the Kingdom is like the sower. The development of the Kingdom is like the mustard seed, the smallest of all seeds, but proportionately the greatest in its final development. The progress of the Kingdom is like the farmer who sows good seed, although he knows his enemy will sow tares. Such, brother idealist, brother reformer, brother theologian, is the Kingdom teaching of your Master and mine.

Not only is an organism implied in the Kingdom teaching of Jesus but it is a particular type of organism. The Kingdom is to be a *family*—a family of God. When the disciples approached the Master with the request, "Lord, teach us to pray. We know not

what we should pray for as we ought," the first lesson leaves no doubt as to what was uppermost in the Saviour's mind. "When ye pray, pray thus: Our *Father,* who art in heaven. *Thy Kingdom* come." It was not a king's Kingdom for which they were to pray, it was a father's kingdom-family.

The "Children of the Kingdom" have had their eyes upon a goal farthest removed from the Master's mind. They have been puttering around with block thrones, toy soldiers, and card castles. Theirs has been a little tin kingdom on wheels—something to be pulled around the playroom during life's short day and then to be put away when the night of death comes on. They have lost the essence of New Testament teaching. The philosophy of Christianity is natural and yet divinely supernatural, practical yet delightfully poetical, material yet inscrutably mystical. As finally realized, the Kingdom of God is to be an organism of kindred spirits, deeply rooted in the heavenly Father's loving heart. Nothing short of this is Scriptural, nothing less than this will ever satisfy human longings.

The finest definition of the Kingdom idea thus far attempted puts all the essentials into a nutshell thus: "The Kingdom of God is a loving, intelligent family, organized about the father's good-will, living in the universe as His home, using the forces of nature as instruments of His will, and making all things vocal with His wisdom, love and power." Dr. Richard La-Rue Swain has made a real contribution to clear thinking in this definition, so truly inclusive, and exclusive.

"Well," I am asked, "if what you say is true, is not government eliminated altogether from the Kingdom program?" Not necessarily. For government is primarily an offshoot of the family. It is a branch plucked directly from the family tree. Although, unfortunately government has become a prodigal son. It has forsaken the Father and is wasting its substance in riotous living. Patriotism is what? It is fatherhood; this is the true derivation of the word. Quite apart from any spirit of usurpation, this organic idea of the Kingdom restores patriotism to its rightful place in the family line. It is an effort to make it run true to type. True fatherhood is secured in proportion as the state is loyal to the Father; it is jeopardized when it cuts loose from the family tree.

Another asks: "How does democracy come in?" I reply, very naturally. Given the family, you imply the home. Democracy is the political counterpart of the home. In a well ordered home you have the purest democracy imaginable. Without codified laws. Without courts of justice. Without any of the paraphernalia of government, every attribute and benefit thereof is preserved—liberty, fraternity, equality, discipline, order, authority. The rights of the individual are secure, and the interests of the group are served. Notwithstanding the widest dissimilarity, there is the utmost concord obtainable this side of Paradise. The tendency to fly apart is ever present, but the organism holds together—bound by a common affection. Centrifugal love restrains centripetal self-determination. The teaching of Jesus is the teaching of purest democracy. The Father's love is regnant, the children's

rights are secure. A more comprehensive scheme of things is inconceivable.

Yes, I know what some of you are thinking. "Isn't it too bad that the pastor has entirely lost his bearings? Does he not realize that such philosophizings subvert the cherished promise of the second coming of Christ? If the Kingdom is not political, what practical necessity is there for a second coming of Christ? How can there be a King without a Kingdom, or a physical return without a political throne? Manifestly the minister is flying in the face of all Bible teaching concerning a providential political order." Reserve your judgment. The case is not all in. Will it surprise and mystify you if I add that organic organization of the Kingdom of God is the only thing that will ever make possible the second coming? And I might further add it is the one thing needed to make the second coming intelligible to the great mass of mankind; something for which they may well pray.

"Explain yourself." I shall endeavor to do so.

Let me ask, what was it that Christ did at His first coming? Did He set up a Kingdom? Did He labor for the repeal of oppressive tax legislation? Did He plunge into the industrial maelstrom and involve Himself in the cross-currents of capitalistic and labor pettiness? Not He. The object of the first coming was two-fold; first, to reveal the fatherhood of God; second, to realize the sonship of man. In other words, to impart the Paternal Spirit and enkindle a fraternal spirit. His earliest official utterance was, "I must be about my Father's business." His last, alluding to

all mankind, "Behold my mother and my sister and my brother." From which I conclude that when Christ comes the second time it will be to put the finishing touch of living bloom and eternal fragrance upon the original plant. If you will turn to the fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians you will find this statement of the case fully justified. He is coming to participate in elaborate presentation ceremonies. "Then cometh the end when He shall have delivered up the Kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power." The picture here is of a kingdom wrought out by God's children, and presented by the "Well Beloved Son" to the Father as the consummation of the Father's good-will.

We are all more or less interested in the reforms of the day, as we should be. We have not the heart of the Father unless we are thus interested. But we are not to confine that interest to externals alone. Let there be reformation by all means, but let it be supported by a growing company of regenerated individuals. There must be something more than prohibition if the sons and daughters are to be brought under control. There is no royal road to Kingdom Come. To promote the Kingdom simply by capturing now this and now that political party is to court failure. Jesus never resorted to such means except indirectly. His supreme concern was to capture the heart of man and bring it into filial relations with the Father's heart. Worldly simulations of the Kingdom will never satisfy God—nor man, for that matter.

The wretchedness of the world is not due to bad

conditions so much as to bad children. God has provided His children with all the material necessary for the building of a heaven but they have built a hell. Believers have long had the necessary money, the political influence and the social standing for the undertaking. All they have thus far lacked is the vision and the venture. Has this lack been supplied? "Reconstruction" now on every tongue, should mean that upon the ruins of the finest hell ever conceived God's children propose to build the finest heaven. But does it?

Objection is raised that the proposed method is too slow. But, did God ever do anything except by slow methods? Ask the geologist or the biologist. If it takes æons to build a physical universe, does any one imagine that the finest thing in the spiritual universe can be produced overnight? What is time in a timeless kingdom? Here is the point; when God gets done the work will not be undone. His methods may be slow but they are sure, which is more than may be said of man's methods.

A member of my household laid down a new work on archæology the other evening with the remark, "I don't see that the world is much improved, for all the thousands of years of effort since the Pharaohs scribbled upon their monuments. The ancients were afflicted with capitalistic combinations, political graft and trade unionism." To which I replied, "Quite true; but bear in mind you are reading history as written upon clay; there is another history and more authentic, written upon the enduring tablets of throbbing human hearts. Read these and optimism will revive." The

world is growing better every day, because deep down beneath all superficial evidence to the contrary, the Father's love is mellowing and molding us one and all. To be satisfied upon this point one need only contrast man's attitude toward war, for example, when the Pharaohs scribbled their history, with the prevailing attitude when Wells wrote his history. The two are in striking antithesis. Mars *was* adored. Mars *is* anathema. Other inhabitants of Olympus have shared a like fate. The heart of the Kingdom of God has been steadily developing during the centuries, a royal family is slowly emerging from the jungles of Barbarism. We can pass through time in one direction only, from past to future. (Although this now is questioned by apostles of relativity). The order is irreversible. Whoever attempts to reverse the natural order bucks a current that will wind and weary him eventually.

An almost incredible story has leaked out of the Rockefeller Institute. It is more wonderful than any fairy tale. It appears that back in 1912 the heart of a chick was removed from the embryo and placed in a jar containing a friendly liquid. At regular intervals the organ was nourished artificially. After three years it was found that this tiny bit of life had multiplied tissues and its body building powers had increased instead of diminished. The heart was functioning and growing in spite of the handicap of having no wings and legs and bill and feathers. The war took Dr. Carrel, the famous surgeon who inaugurated the experiment, to France. Before his departure he put the

heart in a larger receptable and charged the laboratory staff to see that it was regularly fed. In every letter to his old associates he enquired, "How is my little chicken heart getting on?" Always the answer was the same, "Still alive, still beating, still adding tissue, still growing." Then came the armistice. The great surgeon returned and hastening to the laboratory he opened his pet jar and there was the embryo heart beating away, and adding tissue. For eight long years this homeless heart had lived and moved and had its being. "Wonderful!" you say. So say I.

I would tell you something even more wonderful. There is an embryo heart in another laboratory called the church. It is a homeless heart as yet. However, it is a growing heart. It is adding tissue century by century, year by year. It began to beat back yonder in Bethlehem. It was feared from the first because men saw that it was a likely heart. Repeated efforts were made to stop its beating. But God has contrived to keep it alive, though often hidden away, in monastery, in sacred book and sanctified individuals. Here it beats, beats, beats its rhythm of salvation and service, of prophecy and fulfillment. Century after century this heart has added tissue. By the end of the first century it had clothed itself with five hundred thousand Kingdom children, by the tenth century with fifty million children.

When the shadow of the Dark Ages settled down men sighed amidst the gloaming, "The pulse is stopped and the heart is dead." But, when the shadows lifted and a census was taken at the end of the fifteenth

century the heart was found to be clothed with one hundred million Kingdom children.

Then came the blight of infidelity during "The Age of Reason." Surely no heart could survive such chilling blast. But this heart did, for the eighteenth century saw it clothed with two hundred million Kingdom children.

Materialism now took up its far-flung march through France and England and America. Bedecked in the panoply and accouterments of the most glorified superman it swept on conquering and to conquer. Idealism succumbed, conscience surrendered, the citadels of conservatism were stormed and taken. Vision and emotion took to the high timber. And—the Kingdom heart survived, for at the close of the nineteenth century there were five hundred million children of the royal house of Jesus.

And now Dr. Carroll, the government statistician, comes forward with the cheering information that notwithstanding the earthquake shock of a world war, every denomination in the United States of America has more than redeemed the losses its membership sustained as the result of that colossal slaughter and the attendant lapses in religious responsibility.

The Kingdom heart is living, throbbing, growing. Have no doubt as to that. Let us confidently and eagerly await the time when this heart shall be at home in the White House, the Court of St. James, the university, the industrial order and a thousand and one other forms of political organizations and personal

endeavor. Let us pray more earnestly than ever, and in full faith, "Our Father, who art in heaven, . . . Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

> "Oh, where are Kings and Empires now
> Of old that went and came?
> But, Lord, thy church is praying yet,
> A thousand years the same."

"My Kingdom is not of this world, for if it were of this world then would my children fight."

XXI

WHAT IS DEATH?

"That which thou sowest is not made alive except it die." I CORINTHIANS 15:36.

Man is not born to die. This is the central tenet of the religion of Jesus. And this is the thought of the text. The author takes issue with the dreary idea that the chief function of Christianity is to prepare folks for death. That is exactly what it is not. The Book which lies open before me has but one theme—life. This is its supreme message from cover to cover. Death is introduced only as a means to an end. The teaching in this text and elsewhere is that death is a process whereby God brings life and immortality to light. And, I may add, that for this reason Jesus rarely alluded to death. When He did so it was in guarded fashion and in a way to imply the antithesis of annihilation; in fact, as is well known, He substituted the word "sleep" to enable the dull of comprehension to grasp the true significance of the last observable change of earthly being.

My purpose at this time is to ask and, if possible, to answer the categorical question;—What is Death? I shall endeavor to avoid all theories, keeping as far away from speculations as possible. I shall indulge in no guesses. In short, I shall strive to keep my feet upon solid facts.

There are certain things that we know about death beyond any controversy. For one thing, we know that death is a *liberator of life.* "That which thou sowest is not made alive except it die." When life is first bestowed it is a prisoner. In nature we see this everywhere and within ourselves we are continually reminded of the fact. There are times when our chains are positively galling. How are these fetters broken? How is the prisoner liberated? Read the history of nations, read biography. Study the natural sciences. Everywhere the answer is the same—by dying. "If a man lose his life he shall find it." Strange as it sounds it is nevertheless the truth.

Some years ago I stood in the Cairo Museum, Egypt, studying the shriveled visage of the Pharaoh of the exodus. Not far from this particular mummy was a sarcophagus dating back some five thousand years. A small pot containing seed stood beside the sarcophagus; seed placed there by whoever originally closed the stone coffin. I wondered if those seeds could possibly contain life. Then there came to mind the recollection of a certain archæologist who, having opened a similar tomb and finding therein similar seeds, took a handful back to Scotland and planted them. And, so it is related, they grew! For five thousand years life had remained a captive but through a grave in a garden of Scotland each seed found liberation. So you see we *know* this much about death; it *is* the liberator of life.

Again, we know that death is the *revealer of life.* It makes known the nature of life. Here it is in

Scripture, "That which thou sowest thou knowest not what it shall be, it may chance of this grain or of another."

How true that is. Not the wisest man would be able to guess what is locked up in an acorn, if he had never observed an acorn grow. Neither could any one guess what is locked up in a grain of corn, if a full ear had never before been seen. Death is indeed the revealer of life. Until death comes each seed abideth alone and unknown, unknown as to nature and quality of the life, unknown as to the measure of its life. A complete mystery it all is until death reveals life.

Think of the thousand and one seeds which look alike. I have a good friend in Congress who sends me each year a generous supply of government seeds. A recent consignment reached my New England farm in a decidedly mixed condition. Something had gone wrong in the parcels post, and the packages were broken. It was next to impossible to tell one seed from another. Said I to my farmer, "Henry, do you know anything about seeds? If so, see what you can do with this puzzle." He proceeded to sort the seeds "This is corn. These are beans. These are peas." So far it was easy enough, for he was dealing with things he had raised. But when it came to the flower seeds he had to give it up with the remark, "Guess you'll never know what them is till you plant 'em." And he was right, as my wife can testify, for we got a lot of the seeds in wrong flower beds and had to transplant many.

In this respect folks are just like flower seeds, their

full beauty and value is little known until they die. That is the sad part about it. We don't know one another. We don't even know ourselves. We come to earth all packed up and we never fully unpack—at least not in this life. That is the reason in nine cases out of ten that we so easily form wrong opinions. "Who knoweth what is in man?" One of the greatest of prophets catalogued seven thousand fellow countrymen and missed it on every one. It is well said that a man must be dead fifty years before he is appreciated. At least it looks that way. Abraham Lincoln was criticized, caricatured and maligned throughout life. Then death came. Immediately the real Lincoln began to unfold to the wonder and admiration of a nation and of the world. And more recent presidents have fared no better. If such is the case on this side of Jordan what surprises must await us on the other side. Yes, death is the great revealer of life. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be."

Furthermore and more obviously, death is the *expander of life.* I need not elaborate this statement. The harvest is always larger than the sowing. "First the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear." So goes the argument in the fifteenth chapter of Corinthians. Who will stand up and dispute any of these points with St. Paul?

Here, then, are three facts about death practically beyond controversy. Death is the liberator of life; death is the revealer of life; death is the enlarger of life. Take these facts and set them down beside human life and behold the wonderful harmony of

God's universe. Take Jesus, for instance, the first fruit, the only tangible example thus far of life in its larger aspect and as it is finally to be brought to light. Did not Death liberate, reveal and enlarge the life of Jesus? For thirty-three years the Son of God was bound by every human limitation known to man. Evidently it is hard to appraise even God Almighty when He condescends to wrap Himself in time-bound and space-bound humanity. So long as Christ wore a body such as ours He, too, was misunderstood, misjudged and maligned. How often I have pondered over this. What a comfort it has been on occasion to lift my eyes and to say, "Dear God-man, you know all about it, don't you? You know our frame, you remember that we are dust-stained pilgrims plodding onward and upward. Let me but take your hand, O blessed fellow traveler, and I shall feel within me the growing thrills of an enlarging life."

Now these observations are not only in harmony with what Jesus has revealed of life hereafter but they are also in perfect accord with what is known of life here. Judging from the segment of human life that falls within our purview, man has three lives to live. Twice he lives this side the grave and once beyond. And the remarkable thing about the two lives here is that they are identical in one respect, at least. In both experiences it is a life of development, of preparation. In the one life we are getting ready for the next. In the prenatal life feet and hands are forming, but there are no paths to walk, and no work to perform. Eyes are forming but there is no light, no perspective. Ears are forming but no sound is to be heard. It is an

isolated world, a dark world, a world without task, a world without thoroughfare. It is a life of preparation, pure and simple. Then comes that crisis of consciousness—birth. With a cry, less of pain than of instinctive longing for welcome and for love, we pass out of a world of darkness into a world of alternate light and darkness. Here we open our eyes to find that they have been forming for a purpose. Tiny hands reach out and there are the waiting arms of affection ready to receive us. Nor does the evolution stop here. It proceeds with increasing interest and larger and more intelligible motive. We walk, we handle, we talk, we reason, we reach up after that which lies far beyond time and space and physical perception. Thus we use all of the attributes which had been developing in the first life, and each exertion is a revelation of latent possibilities, a prophecy of more to follow. So I cannot but believe that when we come to our second birth we shall find some one looking forward to our advent there with greater expectation, with more yearning solicitude.

"Continued in our next" is written clear and large at the close of each succeeding chapter of life. We pick up a book. The book doesn't go far enough. We go to the teacher but the teacher doesn't know enough. We get down on our knees and our knees do not carry us far enough. We knock and knock, as though we would say, "Let me out! Let me out! I'm a prisoner. This cell is too small. I must have air." We reach up after God and we say, "Where is He?" We peer into the dark recesses of the earth and spread the

wings of vision. All the while faith is developing, sight is growing and hearing is becoming more acute. In fact, we put on faculties and powers in this life which we cannot use here. God is getting us ready for another birth. Then comes another crisis and darkness again. We pass into the shadows, then out of a world of alternate light and darkness and into a world of all light and no darkness. We awake in His likeness. We arrive at the goal—even life everlasting, Amen and Amen.

Now, my friend, if we know so much about the first life and the second life why should we not have the fullest confidence in the third life? Everything we know about ourselves tallies with all that we know about plants and trees. Everywhere we turn our eyes the sequence is the same; death is the liberator of life, the revealer of life, the expander of life.

At this point some one is asking, "Why is it then that this fear grips my heart when I think of death?" That is easy to explain. The Bible ascribes a very good reason. Sin has put a *sting* into death. Flowers are not afraid to die. Animals are not afraid to die. The little worm that wraps itself in its cocoon is not afraid to die. Why? Because flowers and animals are conscious of no willful departure from the Creator's plan for each life. If nature could speak it would be after some such fashion as this: "Loving Gardener, you made me a palm and a palm I will be. You made me a lily; I would neither smell like a violet nor look like a sunflower."

On the other hand man is filled with a thousand and

one misgivings. For he has taken his life into his own hand in a proud spirit of self-determinism: "Lord, I know you. You are a hard master. You reap where you have not sown, and gather where you have not planted. I have a mind of my own. What I choose to be is what I have a right to be. I know better than any one else, not excepting Almighty God, what is best for me. And what is more, I know a shorter cut, a more expeditious way to the goal of being. I am the master of my soul, I am the architect of my fate." Because of this cold finality a chilling fear grips the heart as the shadows lengthen.

In view of the circumstances this fear element becomes an added hint of something beyond. It brings tears to my eyes as I think of the vast multitudes of good, bad and indifferent people who go on stumbling over these shadows upon the ground, never realizing that the sunlight which casts them is an instinct in them reflected from Him who said, "As I live so ye shall live also." Sin disturbs the natural order and thwarts the will of God. Therefore the sting of death is sin.

I have talked with hundreds who have admitted, often reluctantly, that something put them out of touch with God before their misgivings concerning the beyond took shape. They could almost name the moment when the fear of death laid its chilling hand upon them. To be sure, this is not always the reason. Not infrequently people of reverent faith and exemplary lives are afflicted by a fear-guest, the origin of which is not easy to trace. Whatever the cause here is the point of absorbing interest: there is a cure.

"The sting of death is sin, but thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." The man who wrote thus spoke from blessed experience. Once he was a murderer, consenting unto the death of the innocent. As a murderer on a grand scale he set out from Damascus breathing threatenings and slaughter against such as believed that God raises souls as a farmer raises corn. The matter had been discussed pro and con for no one knows how long, and the thing was preposterous upon its face. God graciously produced the living evidence before he arrived. Saul was convinced, in sheer defeat achieving the greatest victory of life. "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, but thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." And this victory, my friend, will surely be yours—if you accept the evidential value of Christ, the first fruit of the raising.

"All that religion says is unproved, all that science says is disproved, so there you are," says one writer. Nevertheless, is it not true that both science and religion have profoundly modified our views of death. In superstitious ages it was regarded as a tragic catastrophe. Brighter days, however, have dawned and we now see death as part of that great stirring of life called for convenience the divine order of nature.

I close with an incident in which I read many things, for flowers are truly the alphabet of hearts. A member of my congregation presented me with a beautiful

lilac bush shortly after my honored father slipped away to seek and to find the door to the Father's house. It was dressed with ribbons and all the customary finery of the Easter season. Said I, "Wife, we must take this to our summer home and we will plant it beside the front porch." We did so, but sad to relate the flowers and leaves dropped off. Throughout the summer we endeavored to nurse the plant back to life without success. I finally dug it up and cast it into the Lake. One day the following summer my wife came rushing up from behind the boathouse crying, "Come here! Come here!" I went. And would you believe it, there was my lilac bush *growing.* The bleak winds, buffeting waves and thick ice floes of winter had taken the discarded plant and literally planted it among the rocks on shore with the command, "Live! Live!" Very tenderly I dug it up and carried it to a place of conspicuous honor where it tosses its plumed head to this day.

I have a feeling that I am looking into the hearts of many who have felt themselves forever dead in trespasses and sins and wholly cast aside. Once they bloomed in some garden of the Lord. Perhaps some one was unkind enough to say, "You are a pretty Christian." Perhaps some minister was unkind enough to say, "Well, if you cannot bring more glory and credit to the church you had better get out." Possibly some soul-blight destroyed the early freshness of life's bloom, striking at the very roots of spiritual being. Then came a wrench, as death robbed you of a cherished idol. And anon you found yourself adrift. Winters have chilled you, winds of doc-

trine have blown you hither and yon. At last you find yourself cast upon what is to some a forbidding shore of rock-bound Calvinism. But who knows but that all this experience may have been a means of grace. At any rate, as a minister of the risen Christ, I would plant you again in that garden where, other things to the contrary notwithstanding, the purest and sweetest flowers of faith and peace and love have ever bloomed. May I not plant you, dear friend, where your life may develop under the warmth of God until death comes to liberate, reveal and multiply your life?

"That which thou sowest is not made alive except it die."

XXII

MATHEMATICAL CERTAINTY OF IMMORTALITY

Profound problems may be approached in two ways. One may begin with the mystery and work backward; denying the facts until the mystery is resolved. Or, one may begin with the facts and work forward, holding the mystery in abeyance as bit by bit the evidence is assembled. Of the two, the latter is the rational and scientific method. Facts are the ladders with which we scale the heights.

By the scientific method, every problem of religion is negotiable, to a greater or less degree. All would be well with our religious thinking were this method of approach in universal use. Which unfortunately is not the case.

Take the problem of immortality, for example. Approached from the mystery end it presents insuperable difficulties. The more we delve into the mystery the more clouded and the more intellectually uncertain becomes the fact. Approached from the fact end, however, difficulties dissolve one by one as to an ancient and intuitive belief in personal continuity are added in turn the concrete fact of a risen Christ, the physiological facts of biology, and the mathematical facts embraced in the discoveries of chemistry and the deductions of philosophy.

Our immediate interest is the more recent evidence

of a life beyond furnished by chemistry. The giant strides taken by this lusty science have led unprejudiced scholars to assume a new attitude of friendly open-mindedness toward Biblical revelations, an attitude reflected in the declaration of a certain chemist who gives this as his view: "I believe the Bible because every material statement within its pages which can be checked against known chemical laws tallies exactly when taken literally." Those of us who have long "hoped for that we see not" are under great obligation to these men of science who are now helping us to *see* that for which we had only *hoped*.

Reserving the text of this sermon as a fitting conclusion, let us premise it with a few mathematical certainties. And, I begin with a formula which looks more or less familiar, at least to the college-bred.

$$2H_2 + O_2 = 2H_2O$$

Here "H" stands for hydrogen and "O" for oxygen, two of the simplest elements in the universe and the most common. Hydrogen is a colorless, tasteless, odorless gas; the lightest of all known substances. Oxygen is as colorless, tasteless and intangible, yet upon it depends our very existence. It forms 23% of the atmosphere. By weight it constitutes ⅞ of the water of the globe, and ½ of the rocks and earth crust. We breathe it, drink it, navigate it, and lave ourselves in it.

Translated into terms of common understanding this formula simply records the fact that when, in the laboratory, two parts (gram molecules) of invisible

and intangible hydrogen (H_2) were confined in a glass container with one part (gram molecule) of invisible and intangible oxygen (O_2) and subjected to an electric spark, they instantly combined to form two parts of visible and tangible water (something different from either.) Any one anywhere may perform the same experiment in another way and for himself by lighting an oil lamp and observing the moisture collect upon the chimney.

This formula has stood for almost a century as the mathematical embodiment of complete and final knowledge. Chemists supposed that it told the whole story of the experiment. When, lo and behold, along came chemist Joules who said in substance, "Gentlemen, your equation is most incomplete, for the reason that it takes no account of the most important factor, namely the electric *energy* required to effect the combination that gave you the water. Now, that energy was considerable—so great in fact as often to explode the container. I have taken the trouble to ascertain the exact amount of energy required to produce two parts of water from hydrogen and oxygen which I find to be 293,000 units."

This contribution of Professor Joules was considered such a valuable addition to the sum total of exact science that by general consent the discoverer's name was forever linked up with the discovery and the energy factor of the equation is therefore designated as 293,000 J (Joules) and the formula has been corrected to read:

$$2H_2 + O_2 = 2H_2O + 293{,}000\ J$$

And thus the formula remained, complete and final, as was supposed—until—Professor Charles P. Steinmetz came forward with a further correction to this effect: "The equation is still incomplete. Something more than energy was required to produce your two parts of water. It was *mind* that conceived the possibility of so combining hydrogen and oxygen. Mind caught and harnessed the 293,000 wild horses of electric energy. Mind designed the glass container and confined the gases. Surely the creator should be given a place of honor within the order of his creation. It is my suggestion that mind be added to the formula, to be designated "Entity X." It was done. So the exact chemical equation is now written:

$$2H_2 + O_2 = 2H_2O + 293{,}000\ J + X$$

At this juncture a vastly interested onlooker would make a suggestion. It may have merit; it may have none. But I make bold to offer it for whatever it is worth. To my way of thinking there is still a "wide gap" in the structure of this mathematical formula, into which another entity might well be fitted, namely *Personality*—"Entity P," if you please.

"Personality is the greatest fact in the universe," we are told by those assuming to know. Personality is the master of mind. True, in times past it was thought that the brain secreted thoughts as the liver secretes bile. But it is now well understood that the brain possesses nothing which has not been supplied by personality. Supplied, in truth, as books are supplied for a library, also catalogued and arranged upon the

brain-shelves as various volumes are set in orderly and in get-at-able array by an experienced librarian. No mind could have conceived and executed the amazing sequence represented in the formula before us apart from "Entity P." Of this we are reasonably certain. So I venture to add "P" and to re-write the formula:

$$2H_2 + O_2 = 2H_2O + 293{,}000J + X + P$$

What has all this to do with immortality? Much every way. We are just getting around to the most interesting and illuminating part of this lesson in "higher" mathematics.

How much of the equation before us embodies the principle of immortality, think you? Answer: the entire formula. Hydrogen, oxygen and water are matter—which, we are told, is indestructible although capable of innumerable changes in form forward and backward. Decay of matter is not annihilation. It is deliverance. The more the atom is "destroyed" the more dynamic appears to be its life. When at last it becomes a disembodied Electron it proves to be well-nigh omnipotent. Indeed fear is already expressed that if the atom is subjected to much further "decay" it may blow us all to atoms.

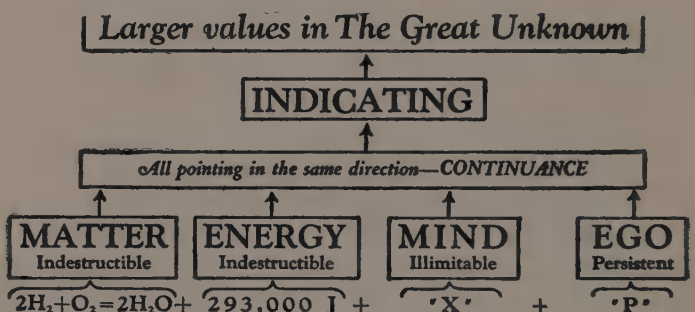
Energy, they tell us, is likewise indestructible. When the flame is "out" it does not follow that it is lost forever. The spark is lurking about somewhere, and may be recalled at will. Professor Steinmetz declares, "The 293,000 J of energy in the equation may re-appear as heat, or as electrical energy, or as a combination of heat, light, sound, mechanical energy, etc."

Mind, too, is illimitable. The consciousness of its own limitations (paradoxical as it may seem) proves this conclusively. "For it is to be observed that such consciousness would be impossible if these limitations were in their nature absolute. The imprisoning bars which we feel so much and against which we so often beat in vain, are bars which could not be felt at all unless there were something in us which seeks a wider scope. It is as if these bars were a limit of opportunity rather than a boundary of power. No absolute limitation of mental faculty ever is, or ever could be, felt by the creatures whom it affects. In our process of thinking we are perpetually encountering some mental barrier through which we cannot break and over which we cannot see. And yet we know it and feel it to be a barrier and nothing more. We stop in front of it not because we are satisfied, but because it bars our way."

As for personality, it is "the first bit of reality we indubitably know," as it is the last. The stream of self-awareness was found flowing when we opened our eyes to time and it continues flowing as we close them. At the grave, when self-consciousness becomes a lost river, its current is known to be deeper, broader and swifter than at the cradle. Moreover, upon its bosom are observed the flora and fauna of an undiscovered realm of personal consciousness and communion. Personality is life's greatest certainty. Personality is so great an "Entity" that there is no room for it in brain or in brawn. It overflows both. It is owing to the instinctive recognition that the real self in us is other than and bigger than the perishable flesh and blood,

that all mankind has believed in personal immortality. "This fixed conviction is so universal in the human race that it is as generic as the faculty of speech itself."

Assembling all of these known facts, as well as the yet unknown, in an enlarged formula, we have something that looks like pretty conclusive circumstantial evidence. (We are looking up, so read the formula from the lower line upward).



Since chemistry, physics, philosophy and religion have kept step to this extent why should they not take the final stride of faith together? Is not sufficient prima facie evidence in hand to justify the largest possible *investment in futurity?* If reason were dealing with worldly matters we know perfectly well that there would be little or no hesitation. Why, then, in spiritual matters?

Suppose the area marked "UNKNOWN" were marked "OIL." If as many facts appeared to justify the hopes and expectations of prospectors in, let us say, the meadows contiguous to this city, think you there would be little plunging in the oil market, little activity in New Jersey real estate?

Here is the way we reason in all things mundane.

This story is told of a high-salaried expert who has been connected with the Standard Oil Company almost from the time of its small beginnings. One Sabbath morning he visited a well-known Men's Bible Class, connected with an important New York church, where he heard something that set in motion a train of thought which to him seemed well worth a follow-up. The lesson "Moses in the Bulrushes" was expounded by the regular teacher, a well-known member of the oil fraternity. At the conclusion, the stranger made his way to the front, introduced himself as the long-time friend of the teacher's father, and then inquired, "Is the story you have discussed to be taken literally?"

"Of course! Of course!" came the prompt reply.

"Where, then, may I ask, did they get the pitch for the ark of bulrushes? You see, pitch means petroleum and petroleum is my specialty."

To abbreviate a long, though interesting story, an expedition was despatched to Egypt to investigate, notwithstanding a world war then in progress, with the result that the most productive oil fields in the world, except Mexico, have been opened up in the land of Goshen. You see, it pays to *follow through* on established facts. The more so, when they project the thought, the achievement and the ego into a realm of inexhaustible values and everlasting verities.

Pitching an ark of grass is nothing, by way of evidence, when compared with pitching the harmony of the universe to the note of "indestructibility." This single circumstance is so weighty that it simply cannot be treated lightly by any one, least of all by one who would be loyal to the scientific method. Chemist and

philosopher have supplied us with pretty good ground for the faith that is in us. They have made the incredible credible, the incomprehensible understandable. They have confirmed all the long cherished Christian views as to the larger aspects of life.

And at the point where science confronts the widest gap in the structure of connected and certain thinking (namely the grave) God has inserted the section of evidence needed to complete the span—that indisputable fact of the risen Christ. The self-conscious survival of the personal Jesus is the keystone that secures the juncture of scientific demonstration and deduction with Divine revelation. The bridge of evidence thus formed furnishes trustworthy footing for all who would explore the future with the view of making enduring investments.

We come now to the conclusion of the whole matter, as summed up in the fifth chapter of First John, verses nine, eleven, twelve and thirteen. "If we receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater. And this is the testimony, that God hath given us life eternal, and this life is in His Son. He who possesses the Son (Keystone of the arch of certainty) possesses life. I have written all this to you in order that you who believe in the name of the Son of God may know for certain (Weymouth translation) (Moffat translation renders it "may be sure") that you already have life eternal."

I counsel thee, friend, to remove the question mark from the equation of life and stake out a claim for thyself in "The Great Unknown."

XXIII

WHAT IS RESURRECTION?

"God giveth it a body as it hath pleased Him, and to every seed his own body; so also is the resurrection of the dead." I CORINTHIANS 15: 38, 42.

Be it remembered that we are to consider not immortality but resurrection. Immortality is a philosophical doctrine. Resurrection is a Christian revelation. Immortality was elucidated by Plato five hundred years before the Christian era. It was the accepted philosophy of Egypt five thousand years or more before Christ. Resurrection is the distinctive tenet of Christianity.

Resurrection—exactly what do we mean by this treasured word? "Resurrection" is an agricultural term. It has to do with cultivation. Spiritually speaking it is more than immortality; more than mere continuity; more than mere repetition. Resurrection is evolution raised to the nth power. It is a means whereby an end is attained. It is *God's method of accomplishing a definite purpose.* It is the highway which human life takes in its journey toward full realization.

God is raising men as the farmer raises wheat. Such a concept was unknown among the ancients. This sublime fact was first revealed, then demonstrated

by Jesus. With a single stroke of divine revelation He rewrote eschatology, gave new embodiment to immortality, imparted new meaning and incentive to mortality and opened up new vistas in human personality. At once the eager question was upon every lip, "How are the dead raised up and with what manner of body do they come forth?"

The answer was categorical, simple, conclusive. By the happy choice of a simile Paul disclosed the naturalness of the supernatural. "God giveth it a body, and to every seed a body of its own." He obviously wished to disabuse the mind of the common notion that "resurrection" is a *miracle.* I think of all human incrustations this is one of the most pernicious. How the notion originated I have been unable to discover. To the great apostle of the doctrine resurrection was a profound "mystery" but it was no miracle. A miracle is exactly what resurrection is not. It belongs not to the realm of magic but to a natural order. This has been driven home with simple but convincing logic.

The comprehensive chapter in which our text occurs is a treatise on soul-raising. It is what one might call the natural history of a rising soul. There is delightful suggestiveness in this seed figure. By turning it over in our minds for a few moments perhaps a few coveted nuggets of truth will come to light.

The obvious teaching is that God plants an immortal spirit in time with the thought of growing a particular kind of body for eternity. Such an idea is certainly not in conflict with the general trend of things.

Throughout the universe, wherever the presence of Spirit is observable it is growing a body. So far as we know there is no *naked* Spirit anywhere. We cannot conceive of conscious spirit entirely dissociated from a material vehicle.

As John Fisk has put it, "It plainly appears that our notion of the survival of conscious activity apart from material conditions is not only unsupported by any evidence that can be gathered from the world of which we have experience, but is utterly and hopelessly inconceivable."

Evidently spirit exists for a purpose. All life and every life appears to be a plan of God. What though the human spirit rebel against that plan, which is its inalienable right, the rule is established so much the more. Wherever life is observed it is the same, whether in human body or plant body. No sooner does it come into being than it addresses itself to the task of building a body that shall be a body of its own.

Every excursion which we have been privileged to make into the microscopic world confirms this. Biology is a most friendly realm. Even the mere tourist here feels at home, there is such an instinctive sense of kinship with the natives. To watch the small life-cell build its body is like viewing oneself in a mirror. One would suppose that these cells had studied theology. Evidently they believe in the doctrine of the trinity. As soon as a life-cell comes into being it proceeds to break up into three sub-cells, each striking out in its own way to do a particular thing. As though belonging to various labor unions, with hard and fast rules, each third works at a definite trade,

refusing to do the work which God has employed another third to do. One third does all the structural work. Another third does the shingling and weather-boarding. Another third looks after the plumbing and wiring. Thus the spirit house grows day by day "being fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth according to the effectual working in the measure of every part." And there are few strikes, but when they do occur, and a life cell becomes a rebel, it is immediately discharged and is cast out of the community.

If New Testament biology is trustworthy, similar laws operate in the spiritual world, death being to the spirit cell what birth is to the physical cell. Although we may not follow the process in the former case as minutely as we follow it in the latter, we may reasonably deduce the conclusion that things which are equal to the same thing in process must resemble each other in program. Which is the gist of St. Paul's reasoning.

Naturally, the pressing question will always be, what sort of a body is it that God is raising out of the spirits He plants down here? I take it, He has planted your spirit and mine that we may grow to be obedient and loving children capable of returning His affection and willing to carry out the Father's will.

Spirit culture is more difficult than horticulture. It is a good deal harder to raise children than to raise flowers. Plant the bulb and you can be reasonably sure it will come up a lily. But with spirit you have that uncertain quantity, "free-will," to reckon with. As every parent knows, children are most difficult to

raise. Spirit children rarely say with the flowers, "I'll be what you want me to be, dear Lord." They are more likely to say, "I am the master of my fate, I am the captain of my soul." And therein lies the problem of Providence, which I have neither the ability nor the desire to penetrate. I am quite satisfied to leave that problem in the hands of Him who said, "If God so clothed the grass of the field, how much more shall He clothe you, O ye of little faith." Of this much we may be certain. God will continue to move heaven and earth until man's spirit grows the body that He wants it to grow, the body of a loving, dutiful and obedient child.

An equally clear teaching of this seed simile is that in death the spirit is transplanted that it may grow a better body than it was able to grow in this life.

A lady in one of my former parishes had a very wonderful palm. It was as old as her oldest son, who was thirty-three at the time of which I speak. She had grown this palm in the house and, fortunately for it, the house was a large, old-fashioned mansion. It was a double house with a broad hall running the length of the second floor. There the palm had always stood. One day I was commenting upon its size and beauty and my hostess remarked, "Yes, it's a fine old member of the family, but it has grown too big for the house." Which was evident, for it touched the ceiling and swept the windows in front and the walls upon either side. That summer a hothouse was built especially for the palm. But the transplanting killed it. The reason assigned was that the atmosphere and intense light of

the special house were too much for a plant that belonged strictly in a dark upper hall.

Now such is not the correct portrayal of death's transplanting. Resurrection does not lift the body out of an old environment and set it down in a new environment to which it is not adapted. Yet this was the very point of original misunderstanding. The resurrection of the body was a stumbling block to Jews and Greeks because they so conceived death's transplanting. The reconstruction of a future body out of the original elements of a long-dissipated body, and the reimprisonment of a spirit in the former body of its humiliation were alike inconceivable—and seemed even undesirable.

Paul meets these serious objections with a clear-cut restatement of the resurrection idea. He insists that the resurrection of the body is not a reassembling of the component parts of an old animal body, but rather the investiture of Spirit in a spiritual body, a new body grown by the Spirit for its eternal environment, as the old body was grown for its mortal environment—in fine a body of its own for a place of its own.

This world is too small to grow good men in. The perfect Jesus did not find this world big enough to permit His Spirit to produce a perfect body. On earth this perfect Spirit had to be contented with a very inadequate body. He was the only begotten Son of God, He returned in full the love of the Father, He sought earnestly to do the Father's will, but an earthly body handicapped His every high endeavor. Then He died and was buried and rose from the dead, His Spirit

clad in a better body—a body of its own. Is not this in brief the whole glorious story of the Resurrection's first-fruit?

It is reassuring to know that the dead are not ghosts any more than the living. Christology is a vast improvement upon spookology. God isn't raising spooks. No, that is the devil's business; he is great on witches, on spirits that peep and mutter. God is raising children—little creators who know how to incarnate themselves in utilitarian form. We are not to go out into eternity unclothed, but clothed upon—that death may be swallowed up in victory. Nowhere in the universe is the Father naked. So why should His children go naked? God promenades the thoroughfares of time and space clad in materials and humanities. He weaves for Himself fine raiment upon the looms of nature. He jewels His diadem with stars. He sandals His feet with service, He gloves His hands with a human touch, He maketh the clouds His chariot. Wherever visible or vocal God is corporeal. Else what is the New Testament all about and what is the significance of the incarnation?

I come now to the comfort of the text. In both growths the body retains its *identity*. Oh, heart of mine, be glad, Oh, soul of mine, rejoice. I am not to be somebody else when I go yonder. There is no possibility of my becoming a dog or a cat. My text distinctly declares that God gives the Spirit a body as it pleases Him, and to every seed a body of *its own*. God, I thank Thee for that! I am devoutly thankful that when I get my new body I shall be myself, I shall

know myself, I shall recognize other selves held dear by me. I am glad that we are to carry our identity across the silence into the great unknown. In resurrection there is no loss of identity. That is clearly the teaching of the text.

This transcendent fact has apparently escaped the attention of those who believe in a so-called reincarnation. I wonder if they have ever studied the natural as eagerly as they study the supernatural. Is life universal or general? It is, always and everywhere individual and particular. You will look in vain for any exception. Peer down the microscope into the realm where the infinitesimal has its being. Here you will find bacteria so small that eight million of them can be mobilized upon the head of a pin, but not one of these billions ever merges into the rest; each refuses absolutely to lose its identity. Everywhere you look in nature the story is the same. Life is never general; it is always individual and particular. Then in all love and reason, where do we get the idea that man, the highest order of life, is to lose his identity when he grows his new body? Is the greater life less than the least?

Yes, we are to be ourselves. Death does not change the nature of anything. If I plant a grain of corn have I any reason to believe it will come up wheat? If I plant an angel spirit is there any more reason to believe that it will rise an angle-worm or worse? By what process known to man could death change the nature of a Spirit? According to Paul there is no such process. Things grow to be just what they are. "Every seed its own body."

If this analogy is correct, as I believe it is, then this follows: God would be defeated if there were no resurrection of the dead. Which is precisely the conclusion at which Paul arrived. "If the dead rise not, then is our preaching vain and your faith is vain and we are yet in our sins and we are even false witnesses of God if the dead rise not." If the dead rise not then God is defeated.

It is unthinkable that God would set out to build His Kingdom family out of dead children. It is inconceivable that any sane farmer would plant a field of grain and deliberately pull up the blades as fast as they attain a good size in the hope of thereby securing a bountiful harvest. The sanity of the Universe is a basilar concept of sane thinking.

Does any one imagine that a wise and good God would permit death to destroy a man of St. Paul's gifts and powers? Would a rational God allow such a man as Augustine to enter the grave a saint and rise therefrom a blade of grass or a tree? Would a loving God permit Lincoln to close his weary eyelids in that last sleep to open them again only upon scenes of canine or feline reincarnation? Can it be that Divine wisdom would permit an infant to come into being, a bundle of latent possibilities, only to be snatched away within a few months by the Destroyer and reduced to a baker's dozen of elements in the laboratory of the grave—its life an unredeemed promise, an unfulfilled destiny? Think of your mother and of all that she was to you, an angel of heaven, an incarnation of God, a daily revelation of enlarging love, a prophecy to the very last of things yet to be realized. Then think of a

wisdom that would dash the edifice of such a promise into irredeemable ruins. I say think of it. But can you? Can you imagine such a waste of good material, such prodigal insanity? For myself I cannot. To believe such things is to make our loving Father a mad God. Nay, nay, away with such possibilities—there is surely more to life than this. Immortality and resurrection are needed to make a life that is worth living.

With all my being I believe in the resurrection of the body. I confess with unblushing candor that I do not know how this great triumph is to be accomplished. But I would not barter the consolations of the Christian's faith for any vain pride at knowing how God does it. Sufficient for me that through the mists of unshed tears I can hear His voice: "I am the resurrection and the Life; as I live ye shall live also."

In a word, then, immortality is the power whereby personality is preserved. Resurrection is the means whereby individual continuity is maintained, identity is preserved and the variety is brought to perfection. Such is the teaching of First Corinthians fifteen.

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